# BUDŌSHOSHINSHU

## ESSENTIAL TEACHINGS ON THE WAY OF THE WARRIOR

DAIDOJI YŪZAN

*Translated by* William Scott Wilson

# Budōshoshinshu

武道初心集

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Cover art: The *kamon* of the Taira samurai clan, one of the eminent class of the Heian period (794–1185).

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Lord Soma's family genealogy, called the *Chiken marokashi*, was the best in Japan. One year, when his mansion suddenly caught fire and was burning to the ground, Lord Soma said, "I feel no regret about losing the house and all its furnishings, even if they burn to the very last piece, because they are things that can be replaced later. I only regret that I was unable to take out the genealogy, which is my family's most precious treasure."

There was one samurai among those attending him who said, "I will go in and take it out." Lord Soma and all the others laughed and said, "The house is already engulfed in flames. How are you going to take it out?"

Now this man had never been loquacious, nor had he been particularly valuable, but he had been engaged as an attendant because he saw things through. At this point he said, "I have never been of use to my master because I'm so careless, but I have lived resolved that someday my life should be of use to him. This seems to be that time." And he leaped into the flames.

After the fire had been extinguished, the master said, "Look for his remains. What a pity!" Looking everywhere, they found his burned corpse in the garden adjacent to the living quarters. When they turned it over, blood flowed out of the stomach. The man had cut open his stomach and placed the genealogy inside, and it was not damaged at all. From this time on it was called the "Blood Genealogy."

YAMAMOTO TSUNETOMO, *Hagakure,* chapter 10

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# PREFACE

*Budōshoshinshu* and *Hagakure* are the most influential treatises on samurai philosophy from the Edo period. The two books were written at about the same time, and both addressed the warrior's role in times of peace. While *Hagakure* was mostly a secret book of the Nabeshima clan until the twentieth century, *Budōshoshinshu* was widely available almost from the start. Yamamoto Tsunetomo, the author of *Hagakure,* was an obscure samurai-turned–Zen Buddhist priest and an avid student of poetry; his penchant for poetical style and themes can be observed throughout the book. By contrast, Daidoji Yūzan, the author of *Budōshoshinshu,* was descended from a long line of prominent warriors and was a well-known and sought-after teacher.

The writing of Tsunetomo, who entered the priesthood after retiring as a samurai, was clearly influenced by Zen Buddhism. Although Tsunetomo dwells as much on death as on the warrior's duty, the connotation is that death of the ego is what allows the warrior to live and serve selflessly. Daidoji Yūzan was a Confucian scholar, and although *Budōshoshinshu* begins with a meditation on death, it is imbued with classic Confucian philosophy, centered on living one's life with sincerity and loyalty. The concept of living selflessly is the common thread that winds through both men's writings.

Many scholars consider *Hagakure* to be the most radical and romantic of samurai texts, while *Budōshoshinshu,* owing to its heavy Confucian influence, is more measured and practical. Both texts are still widely available both in the original eighteenth-century Japanese and in modern Japanese renderings, attesting to their enduring appeal despite the enormous changes that have taken place in Japanese culture and society. Taken in tandem, they provide a range of insights on the role of the individual within the order.

What interest do discourses about samurai times and culture hold for today's reader? First, for those interested in Japanese and samurai history, primary sources such as these permit direct and valuable insight into the

thoughts, ambitions, successes, and failures of these warriors of antiquity. The story of a castle's destruction may read as just another lost battle, but the general's last letter to his son, explaining why the castle must fall and the general with it, brings to life the ideals that inspired his course of action. A feudal lord's last testimony reveals the rationale for succession that ensured his clan's longevity. These writings offer not just glimpses but sustained and enriching perspectives inside the events and politics of the day.

Second, although the warrior class eventually succumbed to the inexorable advance of mercantile spirit, samurai philosophy has persisted in Japanese consciousness up to the present. It is evident in many spheres of society, most obviously in the world of business. Those who have worked for Japanese companies will attest to this, though some might say that the warrior philosophy has been appropriated and adapted by the captains of industry to manipulate the workforce. But it is still one of the keys to understanding Japanese society and its impressive economic success.

Finally, the life of a samurai was imbued with meaning and purpose that often seem to be lacking from our own lives. The materialism and consumerism that are hallmarks of the contemporary world offer no vision or guidance for living, whether or not one aspires to the warrior's life. Treatises on samurai thought impart ideals and values that seem to have been lost, and they offer reassurance about the significance of our lives and our choices.

Hand-copied manuscripts of *Budōshoshinshu* seem to have circulated to a number of clans not long after Daidoji Yuzan's death in 1730. It was first edited and published in woodblock print in 1834 by the Matsushiro clan. In 1943, Furukawa Tesshi published a new edition, based on a different manuscript, which is generally agreed to hew closer to Daidoji's original. These two publications are organized differently, and the Matsushiro version tones down or eliminates some sections that contain radical notions. This translation is based on the Furukawa manuscripts.

My sincerest gratitude to the late Professor Noburu Hiraga, who originally guided me in this project; to John Siscoe, Tom Levidiotis, Gary Haskins, and Kate Barnes for their constant encouragement; to my wife, Emily, who reviewed the manuscript and offered helpful suggestions; and to Beth Frankl, John Golebiewski, and Jonathan Green at Shambhala Publications for helping to bring about this new edition.

# INTRODUCTION

Between the city of Nagoya and Mount Ibuki, there is a large plain called Sekigahara. Today it is scattered with rice fields and vegetable gardens, and skirted by the crowded Meishin Highway, which runs between Nagoya and Osaka. In the autumn, heavy mists collect over the area, making visibility poor, and cold winds are already tumbling down the mountain.

In October of the year 1600, samurai from all over Japan gathered around the hazy fields of Sekigahara for a battle that would seal the unification of the country and the supremacy of the Tokugawa family. When the chaotic, rain- and mud-soaked fighting was over, survivors walked away from one of the most significant battles in their country's history. The Battle of Sekigahara put Japan on a course of peace for the next two hundred and fifty years, establishing the basis and conditions for economic prosperity and the rise of the merchant class. Ironically, this epic achievement also laid the groundwork for the warrior class's obsolescence and demise as a dominant segment of Japanese society.

Its prolonged civil war having effectively ended, the country turned its focus to recovery, restoration, and economic expansion. The Tokugawa shōgunate remained the strongest political factor in the country, but now it moved to secure economic supremacy as well. This it did in part by the large-scale reduction or outright elimination of various fiefs soon after Sekigahara. One result of this policy was to throw about half a million samurai into the category of *rōnin,* warriors without masters or livelihood.

By 1615, both the central government (*bakufu*) and the feudal lords were seeking to increase the profitable enterprises within their domains as a means of gaining economic strength. Farms expanded from growing solely rice to growing other crops such as cotton, tobacco, and tea, while the castle towns quickly evolved from serving primarily as political centers to serving as commercial centers producing pottery, paper, woven goods, and *sake.* A concomitant trend took warriors off their traditional lands, where they had roots and occupations, and placed them within the castle towns where they were paid allowances or stipends—and had little to do.

The samurai watched in amazement and disgust as the merchants' wealth and social prominence grew, while the samurai's stipends remained fixed and their social importance diminished apace.

The bakufu and the feudal lords were aware of this growing problem. After all, the country was still nominally ruled by the warrior class, and there was little question about the continuing merit of the military traditions and spirit. On the other hand, the land was at peace, and the warrior—certainly the rōnin—was now essentially redundant.

A solution presented itself in the traditional values of the warrior class and the ancient Chinese ideal of the warrior as one who embodied both martial and literary arts. Aiming to find their samurai employment as clerks and accountants in central and local government offices, the bakufu and the feudal lords now emphasized education even for lower-class samurai. "To serve" (*saburau* in classical Japanese, the origin of the word *samurai*) now connoted wielding the brush as well as the sword.

This solution underscored and created other problems. One was that many samurai lacked the writing and mathematical skills required for government work. Over two hundred years of civil war had left the ordinary warrior little time to acquaint himself with brush and ink. Although many of the younger generation acquired these skills as time went on, there remained older, uneducated warriors who disdained such work and looked upon it with resentment and distrust.

Also, the new emphasis on education and retraining worked so well that the younger samurai seemed to be forgetting and drifting away from the martial calling, and adopting the Way of merchants and townspeople. The warrior consciousness, with little to bolster it, was beginning to fade. At around this time, Muro Kyuso (1658–1734) wrote,

> Until recent times, the samurai knew nothing of money matters and lived a frugal life. As I remember in my youth, young men of that time never mentioned prices, and there were some who blushed when they heard lewd stories. Thus have social standards changed in fifty years or so.[1]

Kyuso was not alone in wondering at the fate of the warrior class, and by the end of the seventeenth century many philosophers, writers, and schools were concerned with this increasingly complex problem. Some of them espoused a return to the old warrior ideals of austerity, self-discipline, and readiness to meet death, while others emphasized intellectual discipline in letters and history to fulfill the samurai's new role. All called for the warrior to reflect upon his status and to meditate deeply on his existence as a warrior.

The Daidoji clan traces its lineage back to the twelfth-century Taira. The family name was adopted in 1471 when Ise Taro, older brother of the famous warlord Hojo Soun, took the name of Daidoji, a temple near his residence. In 1604, by order of the shōgun, Tokugawa Ieyasu, the clan was attached as warrior retainers to Matsudaira Tadeteru, Ieyasu's sixth son, under whom Yūzan's father and grandfather would serve. This stable arrangement did not last long, however; in 1615 Tadateru failed to send his troops to assist in his father's siege of Osaka Castle, and he was consequently dispossessed of his fief. The Daidoji clan became rōnin.

Daidoji Yūzan (1639–1730) was therefore born into the troubled world of the unemployed samurai. Yūzan went to Edo (now Tokyo) as a young man and studied military science from 1658 to 1672 at the school of Obata Kagenori and Hojo Ujinaga,[2] two of the greatest military tacticians of the period. His training instilled in Yūzan the warrior ideals of a bloodier era and the resurgent ideals of Confucianism that the shōgunate and independent philosophers advocated.

Yūzan left the school to travel about the country, testing himself and teaching, much as his teacher Kagenori had done. He is known to have stayed with the Asano clan at Aki and with the Matsudaira clans at Echizen and Aizu. During this time, he observed the deteriorating condition and morale of younger samurai throughout the country; he began seriously to consider what it meant to be a member of the warrior class and the paradox of its existence during times of peace.

Before he died at age ninety-two, Yūzan wrote *Budōshoshinshu,* a collection of short discourses in which he contended with these problems. The book was a seminal work on bushidō, remaining a favorite well into the next period of Japanese history and even to the present day.

*Budōshoshinshu* was a text meant for the younger samurai, as the literal translation of the title, "collection for beginners in the way of the warrior," suggests. Fundamentally, it deals with the philosophical problem of the warrior's existence in a peaceful world. There were other books, such as *Koyogunkan,* for generals and feudal lords, and any number of books and essays on swordsmanship and psychology, such as the *Gorin no sho* (*The Book of Five Rings*)or the *Heihokadensho.* Yūzan was not concerned with the intricacies of strategy and martial arts technique taught by the various individuals and schools; and as a rōnin, he had no lord's or domain's traditions to uphold. This impartiality made *Budōshoshinshu* more accessible

and contributed to its popularity.

Yūzan concerned himself with the future of the warrior class. With the rise of the merchant class, materialism, consumerism, conspicuous consumption, and the growing acceptance and prevalence of a self-centered ethos in Japanese society, he saw the concurrent erosion of the caste that had been that society's moral and ethical standard-bearer.

Yūzan's solution was a dual view of life that stressed both personal and social ethics, both individual growth and social stability. This echoed the Confucian ideal that stability and growth proceed outwardly from within, and that a well-ordered society arises from the morality of the individuals who compose it. As articulated in the Confucian classic *The Great Learning,*

> The men of old who wanted to manifest their clear virtue to all under heaven first put their countries under control. Those who wanted to bring their countries under control first put their families in order. Those who wanted to put their families in order first cultivated their own lives. Those who wanted to cultivate their own lives first rectified their minds. Those who wanted to rectify their minds first made their wills sincere.

The comportment of the warrior must be a model for society. The inward leads outward, the spirit to the flesh, the one to the many. This tension between inner and outer pervades these essays, and is the great underlying principle and theme of Yūzan's ethics.

To Yūzan, the process was one of pragmatism and practicality. If the warrior began with the ideal of tempering both his martial (武) and literary (文) capabilities, he would have the balance (斌) necessary to proceed through the simple problems that make everyday life what it is. The exercise then became a matter of thought, application, will, and ultimately, sincerity; and the book became an intellectual walkthrough for beginners.

Yūzan's view presented a radical contrast to that of his contemporary Yamamoto Tsunetomo, the author of *Hagakure,* whose ethics were based on the flash of intuition and a very different view of the temporal. Yūzan emphasized the process and strength of structure, Tsunetomo the essence of the moment and the beauty of the shattering jewel. Both men posed questions about how we live and how we die. Their answers give texture to the remarkable fabric of warrior thought and philosophy.

The nameless samurai in the story of Lord Soma's .Blood Genealogy embodies the two cardinal values of bushido, loyalty and sincerity—the heart

of *Budōshoshinshu* and *Hagakure.* The Chinese character for loyalty, 忠 (*chu*), indicates the exact center of the heart or mind and is defined variously as "respect, honor, reverence," "total dedication of the heart/mind," or "with all one's heart." The character for sincerity, 誠 (*sei*), implies words becoming deeds. Its synonym is 信 (*shin*), a man standing by his words.

From *The Doctrine of the Mean,* a Confucian text familiar to Yūzan:

> Sincerity is the Way of Heaven. To act with sincerity is the Way of Man. The sincere man hits what is right without effort, and apprehends without thought.… Sincerity is the beginning and end of all things. Without sincerity, nothing exists.

Thus, the other values of bushidō, such as loyalty, filial devotion, courage, and decorum, naturally follow when the warrior is sincere.

Yūzan exhorts the lower-class samurai to refine their martial spirit and strengthen their sense of absolute loyalty, 忠誠 (*chu-sei*), by "always keeping death in mind," which can be considered a corollary to "Each encounter is the meeting of a lifetime," a phrase found both in Zen Buddhism and the Way of Tea. Absolute loyalty, and the sincerity in which it is anchored, is the undercurrent of the discourses in this book and the cornerstone of living intentionally.

CHAPTER 1

# Make Life Replete, Constantly Thinking of Death

The man who would be a warrior regards it his most basic objective to keep death in mind always, day and night, from the time he picks up his chopsticks to enjoy his morning meal on New Year's Day to the evening of the last day of the year. When a warrior constantly keeps death in mind, both loyalty and filial piety are realized, and myriad evils and disasters are avoided; he is without illness or mishap and lives out a long life. In addition, even his character is improved. Such are the many benefits of this practice.

When we consider this, we see that a man's life is fleeting, like the dew in the evening or the frost in the morning. And herein is something particularly dangerous: when a man living the life of a warrior supposes that he will be able to live for a long time, doing exactly as he pleases, he will feel that he has many years to serve his lord and attend to his parents. Thus, when some event does occur, he will be lacking in his duty and shabby in his devotion. If a warrior is conscious that a man may be alive today but not tomorrow, he will be aware that today may be his last chance to serve his lord and attend to his parents. Thus, receiving orders before his lord or looking upon his parents with thoughts that it may be for the last time, his concern for them will be sincere. Accordingly, it is said that he will fulfill both loyalty and filial piety.

Now, a mind that is negligent and inclined to forget death will beget a lack of prudence. Arguments will be started over insensitive speech, and conflicts will flare up over matters that could have been ended simply by ignoring them. While walking around without reserve amid crowds on pointless temple sightseeing trips, bumping into odd fools and getting into unanticipated fights, a man will lose his life, drag down the honored name of his lord, and bring trouble to his family.

All these disasters occur from the negligence of not keeping death in mind.

When one has death in mind, he will—being of a warrior rank—understand the importance of discrimination in words, both in addressing others and in answering what others address to him. Because of this, he will have no unwise arguments and, of course, will not go to inessential places even when invited. In this way, he will not get involved in any unanticipated situations. Thus, he can avoid myriad evils and disasters.

No matter whether he be of high or low rank, if a man forgets about death, he will constantly eat and drink too much, become involved in lasciviousness and all manner of unhealthful activities, and bring disaster to his innards and a sudden, untimely death. Even if he continues to live, in the end he will become a useless invalid.[3] But when a man keeps death constantly in mind even though he may be young and healthy, if he is constantly aware of the preservation of his health, eats and drinks in moderation, and trains himself prudently to keep sexual indulgence at bay, his body will remain sound. It is exactly for this reason it is said that he will live out a long life without disease or incident.

Moreover, when a man sees death as something far away and feels that his stay in this world will be a lengthy one, he will be beset with various ambitions and deep avarice. Coveting the possessions of others and holding his own too dear, he will develop the disposition of a merchant or a farmer. When death is held constantly in mind, and this world is seen in its triviality, the greed in one's heart will weaken as a matter of course, and the squalid tempers of avarice and selfishness will not greatly assert themselves. For this reason, it is said that even a man's character will improve.

A man must always keep death in mind. On the other hand, there was a monk by the name of Shinkai, mentioned in Yoshida Kenko's *Tsurezuregusa,*[4] who constantly cowered and waited, thinking of his final moments twenty-four hours a day. Now, although it may be the austerity of a monk to keep death in mind in this way, it is not in accord with the fundamental objective of a warrior's discipline. To approach death in such a manner would not be good at all, for one would abandon the Way of loyalty to his lord and filial piety toward his parents, and be lacking in his calling as a warrior.

Day and night, without fail, as one is involved in all his business, both public and private, when there is just a moment for the heart to be calm, death should be kept in mind. Such is this matter. Tradition has it that Kusunoki Masashige instructed his son, Masatsura, with these words: "Constantly learn death."

These words are for the understanding of those intending to be warriors.

CHAPTER 2

# Do Not Forget Readiness for Battle

For the man who would be a warrior, it essential to keep the spirit of battle in mind twenty-four hours a day. Our country is different from others, for here, even the lowliest merchant, farmer, or artisan is attentive enough to carry with him a rusty old sword. This is the custom of the people of the warrior nation of Japan and is the Way of the Gods, unchanged for ten thousand generations.

Be that as it may, the people of the three classes [of farmer, artisan, and merchant] do not have a martial calling. For those in the warrior class, right down to the lowest type of menial, attendant, or lackey, there is the established custom of never being apart from one's sword. It goes without saying that for those above the rank of samurai, one's sword does not leave one's side even for an instant. Thus, a true warrior will always be prepared, even to the extent of having a bladeless or wooden sword with him when he bathes. This is due to his intention to keep the spirit of battle deep within him.

A warrior maintains this attitude in his home, and even more so when he leaves his own surroundings and goes out to other places. When leaving home, he should keep in mind the possibility of unexpectedly meeting madmen, drunkards, and all manner of fools along the road or even at his destination. This is akin to the saying of the ancients, "Leaving his gate, he sees the enemy."

Because the man with the status of warrior fastens swords to his side, he should never forget the spirit of battle.[5] When one does not forget the spirit of battle, the necessity of keeping death in mind will be fulfilled. A samurai who fastens swords to his side and yet does not have the spirit of battle constantly in mind is no different from a merchant or farmer wearing a warrior's skin.

These words are for the understanding of those intending to be warriors.

CHAPTER 3

# Learning Is Also Important for the Warrior in Times of Peace

A man who would be a warrior stands above the other three classes and carries on the duties of administration. Thus, it is fitting that he be involved in Learning, and able to distinguish broadly the nature of things.

Be this as it may, the warriors who were born in times of confusion invariably served in full capacity in their first campaigns by the age of fifteen or sixteen. Accordingly, by the time they were twelve or thirteen years old, it was proper for them to be skilled in horsemanship, archery, riflery, and all the other martial arts. They had hardly any time to face a bookstand and open reading materials, or to sit at a desk and take up a brush. Thus, they were naturally unlearned and illiterate, unable to write a single Chinese character.

Although there were any number of warriors like this during the Warring States period,[6] it was not necessarily because of their having no intentions [toward Learning] or being poorly educated by their parents. They were unlearned because they labored solely in the Way of the Warrior, and were used in that capacity at that time. Today, although warriors are born into times when the land is at peace, it cannot be advocated that they treat their intentions in the Way of the Warrior lightly. Neither is it like a generation living in the times of confusion, when warriors would absolutely serve in their first campaigns when they were fifteen or sixteen.

Thus, when a boy passes the age of ten, he should be instructed to read such works as the Four Books, the Five Classics, and the Seven Books,[7] and to practice calligraphy and writing. Moreover, by the age of fifteen, as his physical strength increases and his health becomes sound, he should learn archery and horsemanship, and be made skillful in all the martial arts. These should be one's intentions in bringing up the child of a warrior in times of peace.

There is, to a certain extent, an excuse for the previously mentioned illiteracy of the warrior of troubled times. But excuses cannot be made for the ignorant and illiterate warrior in times of peace. Nor can the situation be blamed on the youth or weakness of children. It is simply a matter of parents' negligence and carelessness, in the end due to ignorance of the proper way to love a child.

These words are for the understanding of those intending to be warriors.

CHAPTER 4

# Be Devoted, Even to Negligent Parents

The man who would be a warrior considers it most important to discharge his filial duties to his parents with tender care. Even if a man is clever and intelligent, surpasses others, is an eloquent speaker, and was born with a pleasing appearance, if he is not loyal to his parents, he will be useless. In bushidō, one considers it essential to know the difference between the root and the branch, and to act accordingly. A man who has difficulty in discerning the root from the branch will likely have no understanding of duty, and it is difficult to call a man who does not understand duty a "warrior."

Knowing the difference between the root and the branch, one will consider his parents as the root of his body, and his body as the branch of their flesh and blood. Thus, when a man's true desire is to raise himself in this world but he treats his parents shabbily, it is because he has no discernment of root and branch.

There are, moreover, two levels in discharging one's filial duties to one's parents. For example, there is nothing impressive about a child who consistently fulfills his duties to parents who are completely devoted. Parents of this caliber are of a gentle disposition and, loving the child sincerely, consider his upbringing with tenderness. They spend their hard-earned stipend on his weaponry, riding materials, and household goods, making sure that nothing is lacking. They also find him a good wife and, when they finally retire, leave him their entire inheritance.

The reason for this is as follows: once becoming intimate and mutually concerned even with a perfect stranger, if the stranger put out efforts on your behalf, you would not, even when unobserved by others, treat him with indifference, but rather would consider his affairs as significant. You would

postpone your own problems and put the stranger's matters to the fore. How much more, then, when your own parents act with loving benevolence, leaving no stone unturned on your behalf? No matter how much a child exhausted his strength in discharging his filial duties in such a case, it could not be said to be sufficient. This would be common filial piety and thus would have nothing praiseworthy about it.

There are parents, however, who are not at all tenderhearted, who, growing old and senile, make nothing but trivial complaints, and leave nothing as an inheritance, but rather bring their already hard-pressed child into dangerous circumstances, unaware that simply bringing up a child should be a satisfaction to them. They do nothing but complain about their daily food and clothing and, in addition to all this, think nothing of letting their child lose face in public by telling others what terrible strains and burdens they have gone through because their son was an unfilial sort, caring little that they were growing old. To respect even such parents as these, facing difficulties and earnestly lamenting their decrepitude, never ignoring them, and always discharging one's filial duties with sincerity is the mindfulness of a dutiful son.

A warrior with such a disposition will have a good understanding of the Way of loyalty and duty when serving a lord. He will labor in true fidelity, not only when his lord's power is flourishing but even when his master has met something unexpected and is in trouble. Such a warrior will not leave his lord's side even if his allies have dwindled from one hundred horsemen to ten, or from ten to only one. No matter how the enemy's arrows rain down, he will stand to meet them without a thought for his life, discharging his duties with martial loyalty.

Although the words *parent* and *lord, filial piety* and *loyalty* are different, in the sincerity of the mind they are one. Thus, it has been said in the words of the ancients: "Look for a loyal retainer in the house of a devoted child." It is unreasonable to say that a man may be disloyal to his parents yet loyal and proper to his lord.

A man whose mind is so immature that he is not filial to his very source will certainly not feel duty or obligation, nor fully act with loyalty toward a lord with whom he lacks the bond of nature.

Although a man who is disloyal to his parents may go out and serve under a lord, he will always keep his eye on his lord's circumstances and, if he sees that they decline in the slightest way, he will quickly change his design, leave amid battle, and make his way out through a rain of arrows. That such a man will be unrighteous enough even to conspire with or defect to the

enemy has been established in both the past and the present. This is a matter for both a sense of shame and circumspection.

These words are for the understanding of those who would be warriors.

CHAPTER 5

# A Sense of Shame Will Uphold Justice

Bushidō is established when a man who would be a warrior has a solemn understanding of justice and injustice, and the absolute resolution to strive in the former and avoid conduct in the latter. Justice and injustice are defined as good and evil, justice being nothing other than good, injustice being nothing other than evil. Although men are not always able to distinguish good from evil or justice from injustice, often they consider the performance of justice and the advancement of good as confining and troublesome, and the achievement of injustice and evil as interesting and easy. Thus, they devote themselves to injustice and evil, and find the performance of justice and the advancement of good to be distasteful.

If a man is a simpleton, unable to distinguish right from wrong or justice from injustice, it is one thing. But a man who has understood in his heart the evil of injustice and then turns his back on duty and commits acts of injustice anyway does not possess the character of a warrior. This is an extremely regrettable situation.

It can be said that a shallowness of forbearance is the source of such unjust acts. Although the phrase "shallowness of forbearance" does not seem so bad, when one looks at its root, he will understand injustice arises from cowardice. Thus, it is said to be essential for a warrior always to avoid injustice and to act justly.

Now, there would seem to be three levels of what is called "acting according to justice." As an example, say you are going out with an acquaintance to some place or another, and your companion has brought with him one hundred *ryo* in cash. As it would be inconvenient for him to walk around with it in his pocket, he entrusts it to your keeping until returning, and thus you become the secret recipient of that money. But before you leave

together, the man is suddenly stricken with food poisoning or apoplexy and dies on the spot, with not a soul knowing that money passed between the two of you.

In such a situation, a man who acted justly would be pained by the circumstances and, without the least evil in mind, would explain the matter of the entrusted money to the man's relations and quickly return it to them.

Next, there is the person who would reason that the man was just an acquaintance and hardly anyone with whom he was familiar or intimate. Moreover, as no one knew about the money, no one would be likely to inquire about it later. This was a convenient event, since his circumstances were rather pressed, and it would not hurt to keep the money himself. To have such evil thoughts, but then to feel their sordidness and a sense of self-revulsion, and to return the money in the end, is to feel shame in one's heart and act with justice.

Finally, there is the man who returns the money when there is at least one person among his family and servants who knows about the entrustment of money, and who is ashamed of that person's opinion or afraid of rumors in the future. This is said to be having a sense of shame before others and acting with justice. Although there is some doubt as to what such a man would do if no one knew of the money, it can be said that he is a man who knows what justice is and acts accordingly.

Generally, an understanding of behaving justly originates with a sense of shame before the deep scorn of one's intimates, beginning with one's family and servants, which in turn widens to shame before the derision and scorn of others. When a man practices justice and avoids injustice in this way, it is certain that the practice itself will become a mental habit, and later he should possess a disposition for enjoying justice and hating injustice.

In the Way of martial valor as well, a man of natural valor will advance on the battlefield no matter how violent the rain of arrows and gunfire, with no thoughts at all, immersed in loyalty and duty, making a target of his own body. When the valor of such a mind manifests itself, there is nothing further to be said about our admiration for the man's conduct.

Again, according to the individual, there are those who get weak in the knees and fainthearted, wondering how best to act in such dangerous situations. Nevertheless, as they will be seen by their allies as the only ones who remain while those around them advance, and will be unable to make excuses later, they are compelled to make up their minds and advance along with the previously mentioned valiant men. Such men are far inferior to those who are naturally courageous. Yet even they, meeting with such

conditions many times, repeating the experience and becoming used to it, will become strong warriors of praiseworthy deeds, in no way second-rate to those born brave.

Thus, it is said that there is no principle better than a sense of shame for acting with justice and striving with courage. But there is nothing that can be taught to the man who acts unjustly, ignoring the accusations of others, or who continues to commit deeds of cowardice, regardless of the derision and condemnation of his unmanliness.

These words are for the understanding of those who would be warriors.

CHAPTER 6

# In the Mind, the Way; in Form, the Law

The study of the Way of the Warrior is nothing other than inwardly regulating the mind according to the Way and outwardly preserving the Law in form.

Regulating the mind according to the Way is understanding that one manages his affairs following the justice and correctness of the Way of the Warrior, and does not diverge a hair's breadth into unrighteousness or evil ways. Thus, it is quite proper to meet with men of virtue, learned in the works and traditions of the sages, to study in detail the stories of the Way.

Regarding preserving the Law in form, there are two Laws and four levels. The two Laws are the Law of Normal Conditions and the Law of Altercation. The four levels include, within the Law of Normal Conditions, the Gentleman's Code [士法] and the Martial Arts [戦法], and within the Law of Altercation, Martial Law [兵法] and Combat Strategy [軍法].

First, the Gentleman's Code is in bathing in the morning and at night, washing one's hands and feet, and keeping one's body clean. Early each morning, the Gentleman should bind up his hair, from time to time shaving his forehead. He should wear the correct clothing according to the season, and carry his long and short swords. Things of this nature go without saying. He should also carry a fan at his waist, even in cold weather. In meeting with guests, the Gentleman should observe the length and breadth of courtesy according to the guest's social position and take care not to speak useless words.

Even in partaking of a single bowl of rice or cup of tea, one should be prudent to do so in a skillful way, avoiding carelessness. If a man is serving as a retainer, whenever he is off duty or resting, he should learn something from a book or practice writing, rather than just sitting around. Beyond that,

he should impress in his mind the old ways of the warrior clans. Whether coming or going, sitting or sleeping, he should carry himself so that his actions and manners befit a warrior.

Next are the Martial Arts. Although there is nothing lacking in the Gentleman's Code, a man's basic purpose as a Gentleman Warrior [武士, *bushi*] is to train in the usage of arms. Thus, one should be determined to begin by unsheathing the sword at his waist and learning what it is to fight. He should pursue training in all the martial arts—whether handling the spear, horsemanship, archery, or riflery—attaining his own measure of skill.

If a man will advance and discipline himself in the levels of the Gentleman's Code and the Martial Arts, he will not be lacking in the Law of Normal Conditions, and will be considered a good and useful warrior by most people.

Be this as it may, the warrior is a man who serves at times of altercations, which are matters of social disturbance. At such times, a man puts on armor without ceremony and must put aside for a while the usual Gentleman's Code. Men who are ordinarily called "lord" and "master" are now called "general," and samurai retainers of both high and low rank are called "soldiers" and "troops." Both high and low doff formal dress, don armor, grasp the soldier's staff, and advance toward the enemy. This is the condition of the battle camp. The various methods and measures concerning these things are called Martial Law, and a warrior should not be without this knowledge.

Finally, there is Combat Strategy. When one's enemies and allies are at the point of battle, these strategies are the determinants of victory, when one has correctly judged his allies' prepared dispositions and the deployment of their numbers, or [are the determinants of] defeat, when he has managed these conditions poorly. The practices and secret traditions of these various methods and measures are called Combat Strategy, and a warrior should also possess this knowledge.

A warrior accomplished in the knowledge of the four levels of the Law of Normal Conditions and the Law of Altercation is said to be a samurai of the highest quality.

Although a warrior will get by as an individual preparing himself only in the Law of Normal Conditions, if he has only a superficial understanding of the two levels of the Law of Altercation, he will be useless in such important roles as general, group leader, or administrator.

It is essential that a warrior aim beyond himself to think these points over well and, as a warrior, train himself in the disciplines of Martial Law and

Combat Strategy, as well as the Gentleman's Code and the Martial Arts. He should never put aside his aim of eventually becoming a first-class samurai.

These words are for the awareness of those intending to be warriors.

CHAPTER 7

# Choosing a Horse

In ancient times, the word "warrior" was expressed as "bow and horse" [弓馬, *yumiba*], and men of both high and low rank attained the heights of the martial arts by practicing archery and horsemanship. In recent times, the warrior considers the long sword, the spear, and horsemanship essential and disciplines himself accordingly. Beyond these, there are the many arts of archery, *iaido* [drawing the sword and cutting in one movement] and judo; and it is important that young warriors exert themselves day and night to learn these arts well.

Particularly, the warrior of low rank should learn to ride well. Even if the horses are inferior or unruly, he should be able to ride them without hindrance. This is because horses that are both easy to ride and beautiful are the rarest things on earth. Even if such horses exist, they will be owned by warriors of high rank, and hardly steeds that would be reined by lower-class warriors.

If a man becomes accomplished in horsemanship, he will be able to select a horse of low quality, bad habits, or unruliness, but it will still be sufficient. He will be able to purchase a horse for his own use, and it will be the same as having one that is much more expensive.

Generally, paying great attention to the coloration and markings of a horse's coat is a matter for warriors of the upper classes. For a warrior of the lower classes, it is essential to understand that he should simply search out a horse that is adequate, regardless of whether its color or markings please him or whether it is a horse that others dislike.

Many years ago, among the warrior generals of the Murakami clan in Shinshu,[8] there was an accomplished warrior named Gakuganji who led three hundred horsemen. He developed a tradition of having horses, both for himself and for the clan's retainers, with color and coat markings ordinarily not favored by others. He would not train the clan's samurai on a regular

riding ground, but would go out with fifty to a hundred horsemen to the wide field below the castle and, taking the lead, would gallop about the field in a crisscross pattern. He praised as good riders those men who could ride freely so that when they looked about to fall they could regain the saddle, and when they looked secure in the saddle they could quickly leap to the ground. Those who were not so accomplished were known as poor riders. In those days, even the retainers of Takeda Shingen were known to watch adversaries such as Gakuganji very carefully, and this was high praise for his art.

Although it is a fine thing for a warrior to be a lover of horses, there is both good and bad to this. Warriors of old loved horses because, when there was a battle and they put on their armor and banners, they were weighted down and were unable to walk well. Thus, they could not perform battle maneuvers without horses. In this way, their horses acted in place of their two legs. And if some incident occurred, it would be by riding these horses that they would take the lead and excel in valor. Moreover, when a warrior went out to meet the enemy in battle on his horse, it was likely that the animal, too, would receive serious wounds and possibly lose its life. Therefore, although a horse is but a beast, such men thought of them with sympathy and were always diligent in feeding them and rubbing them down.

Of those men who are called horse lovers today, nine out of ten will search out a low-priced horse with bad habits, of which the owner has become tired, and correct its habits; or they will find a smaller horse that has been used in the countryside, and train and groom it. Their intentions, however, are to sell these horses at high prices to those in search of such animals, and so they never have good horses of their own. Such men, without exception, have natures that are no different than those of horse traders and brokers, and for that reason they are inferior to those who do not love horses at all.

These words are for the understanding of those intending to be warriors.

CHAPTER 8

# Gossip and Backtalk Are Inexcusable

It is essential that a warrior in the service of a lord has the prudence not to gossip about the wrongdoings he has observed concerning his companions. This is because a man should be circumspect enough to remember that he himself is no saint or sage, and over a long period of time he has certainly made mistakes and had misunderstandings.

One might think it natural that especially those warriors who are chief retainers and clan elders, and who are above all other samurai, should be equal in character, wisdom, and wit to the gravity of their office and stipend—and that when this is not so, criticism is reasonable. In the long run, however, it is not.

The reason for this is as follows. The warriors who became chief retainers and elders for the shōgun, the man who ruled the entire country, were chosen from the many provincial and castle lords chiefly for their personal characters. As they were already officials, it was considered that none of these men would be lacking in talent.

For the clans of the lords governing the various districts and provinces, however, there were very few samurai among the many who were fit, in terms of stipend and lineage, who would be able to take the positions of chief retainers and elders. Therefore, because it was difficult to choose men strictly on their personal characters, the lords chose men largely of the common run who were blessed in terms of their stipends and lineages, and added these to the ranks of chief retainers and clan elders. The lords thought that with time and experience, these men would become accustomed to their work and would later be of good service. This is how these positions were filled.

Such chief retainers and clan elders may be a bit wanting in terms of their positions and offices. It should be said, however, that it is a mistake to think that one can observe their deficiencies and then blame, judge, or slander these men.

Consider how human beings are like the grasses and trees, which in some years flower and bear fruit and in other years do not. Thus, there may be intelligent parents who have children naturally lacking in ability, or there may be children who exceed the talents of their parents. This has been so since times past.

It is not that the lord does not see these deficiencies, but he remembers the loyalties and exertions of generations of the man's ancestors and, according to his lineage, places him in a position of some gravity. This is certainly reasonable, and as a retainer, one should take pleasure in and be thankful for such a thing.

Therefore, even though one might hear something very unreasonable from such chief retainers and clan elders, and think that he cannot just let it pass, he should restrain his own desires and finish the matter with proper decorum. Surely had it been the lord, there would not have been one word of rebuttal, no matter how unreasonable his comments might have been.

As the chief retainers and clan elders speak for the lord, it can be said that their word is the same as the lord's order itself. As there is a difference between the lord and his retainers, however, it is reasonable to put one's thoughts into words as politely and harmoniously as possible. It is the correctness of a warrior to consider that speaking whatever is on one's mind in a rough manner to men who hold the important positions of chief retainers and elders is a great discourtesy to the lord, no matter how "right" one may be.

The officials who carry out the various duties of the time are not chosen entirely for their lineage and parentage, but are selected from the many samurai of the clan chiefly based on their personal characters. And as this is so, it is reasonable that none of them will be naturally lacking in talents. However, as there may be some men with whom the lord is pleased, and whom he plans gradually to accustom to service, there may also be some young and immature men ordered to serve at his side. With such men, there are likely to be occasional misconceptions, carelessness, or lack of discrimination; but it is not good to blame, trouble, slander, or ridicule them. No matter how naturally able a person might be, when there is something lacking in him, one should conclude the matter with the understanding that it is due to youth.

Generally, all the men such as chief retainers, clan elders, and other officers make their orders under the lord's discernment, and therefore, speaking badly about their affairs is the same as slandering the lord himself. Moreover, when one needs the help of those men for some business or

another, he will have to be discreet about his feelings, place his hands to the floor, bow low, and humbly ask for assistance. At such a time, will he not have to purse the lips that until now slandered and ridiculed in secret, and speak things worthy of a warrior? Such things should be reflected upon deeply.

These words are for the understanding of those intending to be warriors.

CHAPTER 9

# Do Not Place a Foot in the Direction of the Master

The Ways of Loyalty and Filial Piety are not limited to the warrior class alone. For the classes of farmers, artisans, and tradesmen as well, these two Ways are to be strictly followed in the relations between father and child, master and servant.

In the cases of farmers, artisans, and tradesmen, however, manners and etiquette are secondary. For example, when a child or servant is sitting together with a parent or master, it makes no difference even if he does rude things like sitting cross-legged, having his hands in his pockets, or speaking without putting his hands on the floor. All is well as long as his manner is not rough and his true intention is to respect the position of his parent or master. This is the loyalty and filial piety of these three classes.

In bushidō, the Ways of Loyalty and Filial Piety cannot be completely fulfilled, no matter how much they are guarded in the heart, if the form of etiquette is not adhered to. It is, for example, unacceptable for one who would follow the Way of the Warrior to act in a rude or negligent way in front of his parents, much less in front of his lord. The loyalty and filial piety of a warrior are in being steadfast and not the least bit rude, even in places where the master's and parents' eyes do not reach.

No matter where one stops for the night and lies down to sleep, he should not place his feet in the direction of his lord even for a moment. Likewise, when hanging up spears and halberds, the cutting edges should not point in the lord's direction.

Beyond this, when listening to or speaking about matters concerning the lord, if lying down, one should sit up; if sitting up normally, one should straighten his posture. It is exactly such deportment that is said to show the true intention of a warrior. But to stretch one's feet out in the lord's direction

while knowing well where he is, speaking about the lord while lying down, receiving a handwritten letter from one's parents without proper ceremony, reading such a letter while sitting cross-legged or lying down, throwing it into a corner or using it to clean a lantern: all those come from untrustworthy feelings and are not in the true spirit of loyalty and filial piety of the warrior. A man with such a disposition does not know what duty is, and this because he has not drawn the distinction between himself and others.

When meeting men from other places or clans, such a man will relate and explain the bad things about his own lord's clan. If a stranger simply acts in an intimate way toward him, he will happily and unreservedly relate every one of the bad stories ridiculing his parents and siblings, slandering everyone. Sooner or later he will receive punishment from his lord or parents, meet with some disaster, or meet a death that diminishes a warrior's name. Even if he does live, he will be reduced to a lifestyle without value, and at any rate will be unable to live his life without incident. And this is logical.

Connected with this, during the Keicho period [1596–1611], among the retainers of Fukushima Saemon Tafu Masanori, there was a brave samurai by the name of Kani Saizo. As a general of foot soldiers, Saizo oversaw the Kurogane Gate of the inner castle at Hiroshima in Geishu. Here he kept watch day and night, but because of his extreme old age he would lie down and take naps to rest. Once, while he was napping, an acolyte who served at the side of Lord Masanori brought him a pheasant from a hawking party, explaining that the bird was caught by the lord's own hawk and was being sent by the lord to Saizo.

When Saizo heard this, he got right up, put on a *hakama* that he had earlier taken off and placed nearby, faced the direction of the castle proper, received the present with decorum, and spoke a thanksgiving to the lord. He then scolded the acolyte, saying, "What a child you are, and what a simpleton! This was a matter of the lord's wishes, and you did not announce it as such, but rather related it to me just as I lay there. If you were not a child, there would be a way of dealing with you; but as you are an acolyte, I will let it pass."

The acolyte was terrified and hurried back, relating the situation to the other young pages. Thus, the story was eventually heard by Lord Masanori, who summoned the acolyte and inquired about the situation. When the acolyte had told the story about Saizo in full, Lord Masanori said, "The impropriety was yours, and Saizo was certainly reasonable in becoming angry. I wish all the samurai of Aki and Bingo provinces had minds like

Saizo. Then anything could be done."

These words are for the understanding of those intending to be warriors.

CHAPTER 10

# When Thinking of the Battlefield, One Cannot Be Indolent

The two duties of a warrior, whether he is of high or low rank, are facing the field of battle and the construction of fortifications. When the entire country was at war, there were battles here and military operations there, both morning and night, and a warrior did not have even a single day of rest. Simultaneous with battle was the construction of fortifications. Warriors, both high and low, labored hurriedly day and night on such things as fortresses, wide moats, stockades, and battle and boundary fortifications, and the pains they took were extraordinary.

In times of peace, however, there are no battles, and consequently no construction of fortifications. Thus, for samurai of any class serving a military commander, there are various required functions such as being on guard duty, being in attendance to the lord, acting as his messenger, or even just being close by. Still, there are those who wonder if these are the real duties of a warrior. The field of battle and the construction of fortifications do not occur to such people, even in their dreams at dawn. These people will grumble and complain about giving up what is theirs, even though the amount is small, at the time when their masters are ordered by the *bakufu* to help in some government construction and, because the expenditures are great, the master requests some help in dividing the expense among all his retainers. This, in the end, arises from a lack of awareness that facing the field of battle and the construction of fortifications are the essential duties of the warrior.

Moreover, even for the regular duties of watchman, attendant, and messenger, there are men who consider these jobs toilsome and, though they are not actually ill, will make excuses to be absent from work, rely on aid from their comrades, and have no second thoughts about the trouble they

may be causing others. Or, hating to take on the expenses or take the trouble for the journey as a messenger, some will feign illness and excuse themselves, passing the expenses and trouble on to others. Finally showing up to work, they will be oblivious to the scorn of their fellows.

Beyond this, there are men who, when in attendance or on an errand, will be ordered to go to some place close by and will grumble unabashedly in front of their comrades about having to go to the same place twice in one day or about the violence of the wind and rain. Such men manifest a debased attitude toward their duties, disregarding the fact that one must go to pains in one way or another; and they are nothing more than menials and lackeys in the skins of samurai.

No matter how exacting a man's duty may be, if it is some function performed indoors or accompanying the master as he goes about to places nearby, it is hardly any trouble at all. Why is this? Every time the warriors of the Warring States period went into battle, the heat of the summer scorched their armor, the cold winds of winter blew between it and their bare skins, and they were faced with all manner of difficulties. Yet there was no way to escape or stave off that heat and cold, and so they slept by the roads in the mountains, the sleeves of their armor spread as pallets, beaten by the rain and covered by snow.

To eat and drink, moreover, they had nothing more than brown rice and salty soup, and the hardships and privations they endured on the field of battle or in attacking and defending castles were surely extraordinary. When one thinks these things over, one can see that the peacetime duties previously mentioned are easy indeed. Thus, if a warrior approaches his undemanding duties with a faltering heart, how will he be able to bear the pains of battle or travel? Is this not something to be ashamed of before the scorn of warriors with understanding?

To come into this world in the house of a warrior, a man should be with his armor day and night, making his lodgings the mountains, plains, and shores. Yet, being born in times of peace, men of both upper and lower rank sleep under mosquito netting in the summer and under comforters in the winter, eating the things they please morning and night, and living lives of ease. This should be understood as great good fortune, and there is no reason at all for thinking of guard duty in the mansion, accompanying the lord to nearby places, or messenger duty as being laborious or burdensome.

Regarding this, one of the elders of the clan of Takeda Shingen in Kai, Baba Mino no kami, a man especially accomplished in archery, had the words "Constantly Living on the Field of Battle" hung on his wall. It is said

that these words have been passed down for everyday contemplation.

These words are for the understanding of those who would be warriors.

CHAPTER 11

# Do Not Be Spoiled by Length of Service

Since times past, there has been the phrase "priest and samurai," linking the two; and when one thinks about why this is so, he will surely see the similarities.

In Zen Buddhism, for example, the titles *zasu* and *shuso* are given to the rank-and-file priest, just as rank-and-file samurai are given very low posts. Next, as priests are promoted they are given the titles of *tanryo* and *seido,* just as warriors are given the titles of *metsuke, kumigashira,* or *kachigashira.* Finally, although the priest himself is still the same, when he wears the colored robe, holds the symbols of his sect, and lectures to great numbers of priests, he is titled a *choro* or *osho.* Among warriors, the man who is entrusted with the banners, battle coat, and baton of command, and who gives the order of battle and maneuvers the troops, is called a *samurai daisho,* an *ashigaru daisho,* or one of the six military *bugyo.*[9]

When considered in this way, there is a similarity between the organizations of the Buddhist order and that of the warrior, and thus we have the phrase "priest and samurai."

When it comes to discipline in studies, however, it can be thought that the discipline of warriors in training is far inferior to that of priests. This is because in Buddhism the priest, while yet a novice, leaves his own teacher and makes pilgrimages to the various temples, meeting scholars and famous instructors and making continuous efforts in meditation. As he is promoted through the positions of *tanryo, seido, choro,* and *osho,* even becoming the head priest of a main temple, he labors without complaint to master his studies, awaiting his departure from this world. This is truly discipline at its best.

Although one would hope this would be the same in the military class,

those who are in training and have not yet been assigned duties or have been given low posts have either received an inheritance from their parents or taken over as head of a household after a parent's retirement. Thus, their stipend is considerable, and they are not wanting for food, clothing, or shelter. While still young, they raise families and sleep morning and night. Because they do not make an effort in studying the martial arts—which are the everlasting law of the samurai—they have even less interest in tactics and strategy, which are more distant. In this way, they slide through each day, the months turning into years, while their hair turns white and their foreheads bald, and they somehow take on the look of respectable elders.

When such a man is selected to take charge of an open post, even just the light duty of *tsukaiban,* he is quickly overwhelmed by the position. Somehow, however, with the aid of his seniors and associates, he manages to do it. If he is then given the difficult job of envoy to a distant province, he is caught off guard and muddles the preparations for the trip. Off to his seniors and associates he goes to find out the protocol for this duty, or else borrows old memos and notes on the subject, and finally manages the job, fortunately escaping disaster. Such cannot be called the Way of the Warrior.

There is a limit to the duties of a warrior; and while the common samurai who is yet without an assignment is doing nothing all day and night, he should think over when and to what kind of duties he is liable to be assigned, and what the lord's pleasure is likely to be. He should also thoroughly think through the ways of performing the various duties and, if there are experts in these fields among his relatives and kin, when meeting them he should dispense with small talk and ask repeatedly about what he can expect to encounter in the future, memorizing the details. And if there are old notes and sketches on these subjects, he should collect them, look them through, and copy them down, even if they would be of no use at the present.

If he will grasp the gist of things in this way, he will take a rational and assured course no matter when or to what kind of duty he may be assigned.

Moreover, under normal conditions a man can conduct his affairs by relying on his seniors and associates, and depend upon the aid of their instruction. But if something unexpected occurs and events are imminent, he cannot depend on the help and guidance of experts and, for better or worse, will have to solve matters by his discernment alone.

Especially for the campaign duty of *tsukaiban,* a warrior will need an understanding of the number of troops involved, the qualities of the battle array, the castle's strengths and weaknesses, the lay of the land and its advantages and disadvantages, and the prospect of victory or defeat. Thus, it

has been said since times long past that the duty of a Gentleman Warrior is a difficult one.

For a *tsukaiyaku,* however, even if there are errors in his reconnaissance, it is for the most part a matter of his own oversights and indiscretion. But those with the rank of *ashigaru daisho* and above—who hold the baton of command, maneuver great numbers of men, and give the battle commands—occupy an important office indeed. This is because it is an old and venerable military law that victors strike and the defeated are struck. Thus, the life and death of the multitude of one's allies hang on the general's orders.

To have no understanding of this and nevertheless rashly accept command, conceitedly putting oneself above all the other samurai, is the height of outrage.

This would be the same as a Zen priest sleeping through his days as a common monk, neglecting the studies of his sect, advancing through his seniority and, by means of his bald head, rising to the offices of *choro* and *osho,* wearing the colored robe, holding his religious symbols, and lecturing to great numbers of priests. The false priest, however, holding such a position in the Buddhist world and committing some outrage, simply becomes a laughingstock to his disciples and an embarrassment to himself—he does not bring trouble to all those below him.

This is different among warriors; for the samurai *daisho,* the various *gashira* and *busho* who would be the military equivalents to the *osho,* endanger the lives of their men and allies when they make mistakes in their commands and maneuvers, or lose the battle of the day. Their losses are great indeed.

Thus, it is essential that a man understands this well; and if he is going to find his calling among warriors, while he is yet a common soldier without assignment and has spare time, he should discipline himself not only in the martial arts of the samurai but in strategy and tactics as well, becoming acquainted with the more secret principles. It is also essential for him to study and discipline himself so as never to be lacking in the ability to execute any of his duties, even that of taking command.

These words are for the understanding of those intending to be warriors.

CHAPTER 12

# Ability and Diligence

There are three kinds of warriors serving as retainers to a lord. The first are samurai of devotion, the second are samurai of faithful service, and the third are samurai of both devotion and faithful service.

First, the samurai of devotion will do some fine work for his lord at least once in his life in some important endeavor in which his comrades were unable to perform, no matter what that might be. Because of this, his lord and chief retainers will value him, and even if his daily labors are sometimes lacking, they will know that this man has special virtues, and he will be able to sleep well as a samurai.

Second, although the samurai of faithful service cannot be said to do anything of uncommon devotion, he always places importance in his lord. If there is some way of serving, he not only does his regular work night and day, but also cheerfully and without the least bit of laxity helps when others in the same employment are sick or otherwise hindered. He naturally does his own work faithfully and with care. This is the warrior of faithful service.

Finally, there is the warrior of both devotion and faithful service. While in his heart he harbors the sincerity of devotion, outwardly he strives to work with faithful service, just as a horse's saddle will have two stirrups. And although the warriors who are either simply devoted or just serve faithfully cannot be said to be bad, when compared to the warrior who combines both these qualities they are left far behind.

If a man understands this point well and has committed himself as a retainer, his aim must be in intending to be called a warrior who combines devotion with faithful service. But a warrior who fails to achieve even one of these three is a sluggard in the warrior's service.

CHAPTER 13

# The Law of Borrowing the Lord's Authority

The warrior who serves is said sometimes to borrow the authority of his lord. There are also times when he might be said to steal that authority. Moreover, there are times when the lord might loan his authority to a retainer; and there are times when circumstances induce a retainer to steal it.

The reasons are as follows.

A warrior may be entrusted with an important job, and perhaps because of his youth or low status, or because of the disposition of his retainers, the job will not get done if he does not act using his lord's sway. Thus, covering himself in the lord's influence and undertaking his work for the lord's sake, he "borrows the lord's authority." When such has been the case and all involved have responded well without any harm done to the lord, it is best to return the lord's authority and continue to serve prudently at one's original job with the authority proper to it.

However, there are times when a man commands the respect not only of his associates but of people from other clans as well, by announcing himself as the representative of such and such a lord, enjoying his influence and becoming greedy by having obtained a secret strength in being able to use people. This, in the end, is harvesting the lord's authority as one's own and would have to be called "stealing the lord's authority."

Moreover, there are instances when, according to the situation of the times, the lord may wish to loan his authority to a retainer, thus making the retainer more influential; and there are many examples of this from the famous lords and clever generals of the past. This would be called "a loan of the lord's authority."

But once the job has been done and everything is as it should be, the lord's authority that was loaned out should gradually be returned. Nevertheless, it

may happen that, through the lord's patience and the long-continuing loan, something occurs and it later becomes difficult to make the return. In the end, the retainer makes that authority his own, and this is called "having authority stolen by a retainer."

If such a thing happens, it is not only a great disgrace to the lord, but it can also bring him several losses.

The first is that if the authority attached to the retainer is excessive, the lord's authority will naturally pale. Those in low positions will finally think that as everything—including the lord's affairs—rests on this retainer, they must first obtain his permission and understanding to get things done. This is the same as having two suns shining in the sky and is not good at all.

Secondly, all the samurai and underlings of the clan will consider it essential to ingratiate themselves with this retainer, and will treat the lord's affairs with little regard. Thus, the relation between lord and follower will weaken, fewer warriors of loyalty and righteousness will appear in the clan, and as a result, if some disturbance should arise, the master will certainly be lacking in good men.

Thirdly, not only samurai employed at insignificant jobs but also those close to the lord, and even those men in sensitive positions, will fear the authority of this one retainer and cower before him. Even though they know that the situation is not good for the lord, they will not speak out at all, but will only regret the matter in their innermost hearts, murmuring about it in whispers among their intimate friends and associates. Not one will come forward to explain the matter to the lord, and thus there will be no way for him to know about this retainer's greed, selfishness, prejudice, and secret luxury. In this way, if the lord simply thinks that everything this retainer does is fine and is not attentive to the situation, it is certain that great disaster will befall the lord, the world scorning him as a man who does not know people well and who lacks the character to be called lord or general.

Moreover, in his arrogance, this retainer will have no fear or respect for what the lord sees or hears and will care nothing for the thoughts of his associates. By cajoling the underlings, he will send presents (charged to his lord's expenses) to his cronies and will count as his own the gifts he receives in return. People from other clans and domains who are entertained by him will have *sake,* fish, tea, and cakes "from the lord's kitchen" paraded before them. Thus, he will consider the lord's belongings as his own and, in the end, will weaken the lord's finances and put them at a loss.

When a warrior who understands this principle well is noticed and treated kindly by his lord, it is essential that he humble himself and control the pride

in his heart even more, wishing nothing more than for the lord's authority to shine brightly.

I have heard an ancient saying: "A loyal retainer knows that his lord exists, but not that he himself exists."

Even if, according to the time and circumstances, a retainer is loaned the lord's authority, he must not hold it for long, but return it in due time, never taking the name of thief of the lord's authority. To this one must be resolved.

These words are for the understanding of those who would be warriors.

CHAPTER 14

# Surpass Others in Some Way

No matter how high or low his rank, the man who would be a warrior must have a good understanding of the meaning of the character "to win" [勝]. More specifically, the character "to win" is also read "to excel," and in any case, a man who does not surpass others in some way cannot be said to be a good warrior.

For example, if a man were to spend long years putting effort into learning all the martial arts and yet did not become a master of those arts, he would have excelled others if he could at least be thought of as generally skillful. In serving his lord, on the other hand, if a man goes beyond many of his companions and has discharged his duties well in the eyes of all, he is said to have served in a way that has excelled others.

Above all, at times of altercation on the battlefield, to think of advancing when others are doing so, or to make a stand along with others, is neither very impressive nor praiseworthy. But for a single man to advance when all his compatriots consider it impossible, or to hold his ground when the others cannot make a stand, is the mark of a brave warrior who has excelled.[10]

Beyond these things, it is essential for a man to strive with all his heart and to understand that it is difficult even to reach the average if he does not have the intention of surpassing others in whatever he does.

These words are for the understanding of those intending to be warriors.

CHAPTER 15

# The Moment of Death Is Important for a Warrior

For the man who would be a warrior, regardless of high or low rank, his very first consideration should be the quality of the moment of his demise, when his fate runs out. No matter how clever or good at talking a man seems to be, if in his final moments he is so panicky that he loses consciousness or otherwise faces his end poorly, all his former good behavior will become as water. Such a man will be scorned by people of understanding, and this will be a great shame.

Facing a warrior's battlefield, committing feats of martial excellence, and establishing one's name all rest on having secured an absolute resolution to be struck down in battle. Being thus resolved, when one's luck has gone for the worst and he has suffered defeat from the enemy, his head about to be taken, when asked his name he will give it clearly and fully, laughing coldly and inviting his head to be cut off, while his complexion shows not the slightest hint of intimidation. Likewise, even if one has sustained a severe wound beyond the treatment of medicine, while still conscious he will speak with certainty before his group, section leaders, and all his fellows, ignoring his wounds and meeting his end as though it were an everyday occurrence. Such conduct befits a warrior.

Although we live in a time of peace, when a man who considers well what it means to be a warrior—this goes without saying for the old, but also concerns the young—contracts a grave illness unresponsive to treatment and gradually grows worse, he will have established beforehand the same resolution and will not have the least bit of anxiety concerning this world. Naturally if his responsibilities have been great, but even if he has served only in a light capacity, when he feels that he will not bear up much longer but is still capable of speaking, he will beckon his group and section leaders.

Facing them, he will express that as for many years he has received great kindness from his lord, he has wanted to be useful in some way, and though he has always kept this in mind, he has now contracted this grave illness. Though he has taken various treatments, a recovery seems difficult. Thus, he is going to die of disease without having been useful at all, and though he feels this is regrettable, it seems it cannot be avoided. He will also express his gratitude for his great blessing up to this moment and, should he at length die, have his situation reported to the fief elders and his final obeisance related to his lord. Finally, he should speak of whatever private matters remain. This is only reasonable.

Once having completed this, when he takes his final leave of his relatives and intimate friends, he should draw his children to him and express the fact that it is not the intent of a warrior to die of illness after having received the kindness of his lord for so many years. He will explain that, as these are times of peace, it is unavoidable; and that although they are still young, they should carry on with his aspiration and resolve to be of use to their lord in the case of something unexpected. Thus, constantly striving in their determination to be devoted and to commit acts of loyalty, they will not likely be negligent in the Way of Service.

It is also appropriate for a warrior to charge his children strictly with his last words, saying they should understand that if they go against these words of his final hours and are disloyal and unrighteous, they will be disinherited, even from beyond the grave. There was a Chinese sage who said, “What a man says at his death will be good,”[11] and this is to that effect.

Something like this is truly what the final hour of the warrior should be. However, one should not be resigned to the disaster of an incurable disease and play odds with death, rejoicing when people say that the illness is mild or feeling bad when they say it is serious, complaining in various ways to the doctor, and becoming confused to the point of making useless prayers and supplications, being neither resolved to one’s end nor having any words to leave though the disease gradually worsens. All these are the same as a dog or cat dying of disease, and a man will in this way damage the final hours of the only life he has.

Such a person has not kept death constantly in mind as advocated in the beginning of this book, but hearing about the death of another, he finds it merely vexing and thinks that he himself should be able to exist in this world forever. His own death will be tainted with deep greed and a craving for life.

Say a person living in these peaceful times were attacked by a serious illness, took various treatments that had no effect, and though he found

himself gradually burdened by the disease, did not establish a resolution to die. With such a cowardly disposition, how could this man face the battlefield and meet with an enemy who bore him no grudge at all? Nor could he be struck down splendidly in battle with only thoughts of being righteous. For a man who is constantly aware of what it means to be a warrior, dying of illness in bed can be said to be an important and unique event in the one life we receive.

As stated, regardless of high or low rank, the warrior today who has a lord serves and puts his life on the line even though the land is at peace. This is not just a matter of one's own generation or one's father's generation, or even a matter of decades. It is not the Way of the Warrior to die of an illness in bed while spending one's generous stipend, postponing one's last words to his descendants, and lacking even the consideration of bidding the obligatory final obeisance to the lord who has shown one great kindness. Only a man undeserving of the name of warrior would instead pay attention in his final hours solely to sending for his group and section leaders to secure the succession of his own line. Such things are extremely regrettable and are not the correctness of a warrior.

These are essential considerations for those intending to be warriors.

CHAPTER 16

# Scholarship and Refinement Can Occasionally Be of Great Harm

In the Way of the Warrior, it is a matter of course that a strong disposition is to be considered above all things. But being one-sided and having strength alone, a man will look like a warrior risen from farmers and have the appearance of a peasant or rustic. This is not the way things should be. Although such things as scholarly pursuits, the study of poetry, and the tea ceremony are not considered martial arts, it is desirable to understand them.

First, if one has done no study, he will not be able to decipher ancient and modern literature as he should. Thus, no matter how much worldly knowledge he may have or how clever he may be, it will be difficult for him to make judgments of right and wrong according to the situation. With a deep and detailed knowledge of both foreign countries and our own, and with careful consideration of the factors of time, place, and position concerning them, if one thinks appropriately, he will not be much at a loss when he manages his affairs.

However, when one's attitude is incorrect and he carries on his studies in error, he will become prideful and hold illiterate men in disregard, despite their being good and determined warriors. Moreover, even if there is reason in believing earnestly that only Chinese ways are good, it is wretched to insist obstinately on something without discerning its usefulness to our own country in our own time.

To speak specifically, the many nobles and men of fame throughout Japan's history were not men of shallow understanding and resources. They learned in detail not only Chinese affairs, but also those of more distant India. Sending men directly to these countries, they added effort and understanding to what they observed. The more than sixty-six provinces of Japan then were ruled by only one king. The three holy jewels were

especially handed down in succession, the families of the five lines of regents were established, and further, the differences between nobility and commoner were strictly defined.

All these practices are limited to Japan. Not only this, but attention was also paid to all manner of things: the appearances of men and women, the making of their dress and habitations, and even the production of utensils and other equipment. The practices of foreign countries were followed, but their aspects were changed altogether. As all the customs of China and Japan were kept different, even a man of no judgment like myself can surmise that this was in accord with the ageless, unchanging Way of the Gods.

The young warriors of today, however, carry on their studies in error. They think there is nothing superior to Chinese fashions and despise the ways of Japan, the land of their birth and ancestry. Such men are far inferior to those who, even in their illiteracy, deeply feel the Way of bushidō to be in strength alone. In scholarly pursuits, one should be very discriminating concerning this matter.

Next, the study of poetry as a custom in our land has been practiced—naturally enough—by the nobility, but also by the warrior class. In both past and present there have been many famous generals and brave warriors who were accomplished men in the Way of Poetry. Thus, it is desirable for even warriors of low rank to enter into this study and compose a poor verse or two from time to time.

However, when a warrior's study of poetry goes amiss, and he is carried away, he will feel that he must read all the difficult poems by the past and present masters. He will disregard all other activities and regard poetry as the highest pursuit, become soft in both mind and appearance in the twinkling of an eye, and be viewed as an effete samurai, lost to the customs of a warrior. Especially when a man becomes too fond of the haiku that is so popular these days, he is apt to make puns, clever verses, and other witticisms even when conversing with his reserved companions. Although those present at the time may be amused, puns and clever remarks are generally not things praised by the warriors of either past or present. It is essential that one be circumspect in this point.

As for the tea ceremony, it has been an amusement of the warrior class since the days of the Kyoto shōgunate. Even if one does not practice it himself, there are likely to be times when, either invited by another warrior or while in the company of high-ranking nobility, he will have to take part in it. At such times, there are many proper ways of understanding how to approach and enter a teahouse, how to appreciate the various utensils, how to

partake of the refreshments, and how to drink the tea. Thus, one should find a teacher in the Way of Tea, and come to some understanding of the art. The teahouse is a place to avoid the wealth and opulence of the world, and should have the atmosphere of solitude and tranquility.[12]

Thus, no matter how prosperous or official the place may be, one should plant trees in the garden, giving it the air of nature, and see fit to equip the teahouse with such materials as bamboo rafters, pillars retaining the bark of the wood, thatched eaves, a window of bamboo foundations, rough rattan blinds, a gate for the mid-garden, and a door of rough branches.

The utensils for the tea and its accompanying refreshments should be modest, and the vulgar ways of the world should be loathed and avoided. The richness of tranquility must be earnestly embraced. Because of this, it can be thought that this tranquility agrees with the meaning of bushidō and is a reinforcement of its ideals.

This being the case, it would not be amiss even for a warrior of low rank to build a place for tea at the side of his residence, practicing the tea ceremony in quiet taste, equipped with such items as a newly brushed scroll, a recently fired tea container and tea bowl, and an earthenware tea kettle.

In everything, however, trifling matters easily become important to a person, and by and by one takes pride in these things. Seeing the famous tea kettle another man possesses, one's own earthenware pot becomes repugnant to him, and gradually he wants only fine goods for all his utensils. Just in desiring such things, a warrior of low rank finds that highly prized utensils are not easy to come by, and from this point a change takes place. He sets his mind on seeking them out, learns how to judge them, and concentrates his faculties on obtaining good wares. On the other hand, if he finds something that strikes his eye among the utensils of another, he may earnestly state his desire for it.

Again, along with the utensils, one will begin to think only of personal gain and avoiding loss. Thus, with the same appearance in character of a merchant who deals in brokerage, he will inevitably lose the correctness of bushidō, becoming a man of comparatively poor character.

Rather than becoming such a dilettante, it would be better to have no knowledge of the Way of Tea at all and to be unpolished to the point of not even knowing how to lift the bowl. This would be no hindrance to the Way of the Warrior.

These words are for the understanding of those intending to be warriors.

CHAPTER 17

# Do Not Mix Personal Feelings with Duties

For a warrior in the service of a lord, among his many peers there is likely to be a man with whom he has cut off relations for some reason or another. However, if he is ordered by his lord to serve at the same post with this man, he should directly go to the man's place and explain that he has been officially ordered to work with him and has accepted the order. This being so, it would not be to the lord's benefit if their personal feelings entered their work even by a hair, regardless of their former estrangement. He should go on to say that hereafter they should mutually have no distance between them, and at any rate, should not let their work for the lord be obstructed.

If the man is his senior at this post, he should think nothing of asking for his senior's instruction. Simply put, even if one of the two were given a different job the next day so that they discontinued working at the same post and their relationship were again broken off, until that time they should agree to be without estrangement and to work together with one mind. This is the correctness of a warrior.

It goes without saying that those men who work together and have no prior cause for alienation should be friendly and intimate with each other. People are apt to fight for authority at a job, however, and instead of acting in a mature way and guiding the unaccustomed newcomer, will take pleasure in finding a careless oversight. This is a departure from the correctness of bushidō, and should be considered sordid and unclean.

When facing times of violence, a warrior with such a disposition is a highly immoral coward who will grab the heads that others have taken and strike down his allies. This is a matter to be considered seriously.

These words are for the understanding of those intending to be warriors.

CHAPTER 18

# Old Hands and Dirty White Garments

The saying that "white garments and officials are best when new" is not particularly profound, but there is something to it.

When a white garment is new it is very pretty; but when one wears it for a while, first the neck and cuffs become soiled, and soon the whole garment turns gray and unsightly.

When an official connected with some matter is new, he is naive in all things, places great importance in the commands of his lord, and treats even trifling matters as great affairs. He is especially aware of his pledge concerning his duties, and is prudent and fearful of turning his back on any one of them. In this way, there is nothing lacking in anything he is engaged in.

But even a man like this, whom all the clan retainers praise as a selfless and honest official, after working a long time and learning all the ropes of his duties, will gradually become lackadaisical and careless, as he would never have been when he was new.

Not only that: when a man is new at his job, he follows the stipulations prohibiting gifts and fine notes from people, and if they do arrive, he sends them back with tact. If a situation arises in which he absolutely must accept gifts, he sends out some appropriate reciprocal gifts the following day.

Yet, even a man who performs his duties with such grace and receives everyone's praises begins to lose his sense of discrimination before he knows what is happening. While still working at his duties, greed and grasping begin to grow in his heart, even if just a little. In his heart, he knows that there are regulations prohibiting the receiving of gifts, and it is therefore difficult to receive them openly.

All of this is written on his face along with the hints on the edges of his words, so people will be able to understand his thoughts. Thus, though they put on a face of ignorance, they will contact him in secret or, in establishing

his illicit assistance, will send him gifts using various methods. No matter how much he receives, however, he deludes the officials through return gifts. In this way, his partiality and favoritism are established.

Being stained in this way is the same as when a white garment turns gray. Nevertheless, if a white garment is not simply thrown away when it gets dirty, but is cleaned from time to time, it becomes white again and not unsightly at all.

An official must also notice that his own heart has become somewhat stained. It is reasonable that if he will cleanse himself, he can return to an unblemished state.

A garment, however, becomes soiled due to the natural grime of the human body, and the dust and dirt of the world; but if it is cleaned with some good lye, the splotches and grime will fall away, and it will be clean again. Now as there are various and sundry things that permeate the human heart and stain it deeply, an official will not be able to make it pure again by simply giving it a good cleansing. Moreover, one can make do by washing a white garment only once or twice a year, but cleansing a man's mind must take place twenty-six hours a day,[13] whether coming or going, sitting or lying down, no matter what the circumstances may be. Thus, each time he uses his mind, even if he cleanses and purifies it without the least bit of negligence, a little stain or blotch is likely to remain.

Now there are various cleansing agents for the various kinds of stains, and this is not limited to the washing of garments. Moreover, it is said that there are remedies to remove stains completely. Similarly, a convention holds that there are three agents for cleansing the mind of a warrior, and these are loyalty, righteousness, and courage. According to the way a man's heart has been stained, loyalty may cleanse it. Again, righteousness may cleanse it as well. And again, here is one more secret: if the stains remain fast in his heart even after cleansing it with loyalty and righteousness, he need only add a little courage and use every bit of his strength. He should then find himself absolutely and refreshingly cleansed.

This is the secret handed down by word of mouth concerning the cleansing of a warrior's heart.

These words are for the understanding of those intending to be warriors.

CHAPTER 19

# Distinctions in Family Relations

Those in this world who refer to their elder brothers' sons, their younger brothers' sons, and the sons of their sisters who have married into other families all as "nephews," without distinction, are townspeople and farmers. But a warrior must act with the courtesy of lineage in his heart and without confusing the etiquette of good form. Thus, he is different from the other three classes.[14]

For example, because the son of one's eldest brother is the legitimate heir of the family and will carry on its main branch, even though he is one of many nephews, it is he who will continue the family line of one's father and eldest brother. Should that eldest brother die and his son become head of the family, one would show the same courtesy to him as he did to his father and eldest brother. This is done out of respect not for his status as nephew, but for the ancestors of the main branch of the family. As for the second and third sons of one's eldest brother, or the sons of one's younger brothers, one's dealings with them may be managed with the usual uncle-nephew relations.

It is natural, however, that the sons of sisters, although certainly nephews, should be treated with a little more reserve and respect than usual, both in speaking and in writing, because they are nephews who have received another family name.

Moreover, one should understand that if a nephew, younger brother, or even one's own child has been adopted by another family,[15] he should absolutely be treated as an unrelated person. One should hardly use the expressions spoken when the family is together, for example, but rather the reserved greetings used when meeting an outsider. If a man is of a mind to treat his son or his younger brother in a familiar manner even after their adoption by another family, the adopting father, family, and family retainers are liable to feel scorn in their hearts and wonder if they should return the

adopted son to his birth family. However, if the relatives of the adopting father are unstable, or the family unsettled, or its future status uncertain, it will not be easy to give up one's own child or younger brother.

Such things happen.

Next, there may be a case when a daughter is married, and after a child is born the father dies, leaving the young child to inherit the position of successor. It is essential to understand that, in such a situation, when discussing matters with the deceased husband's parents, eight or nine times out of ten things should be left for the man's family to handle. If the household's finances had been troubled when the husband was alive, and it seemed that they would be a burden on his relatives, it would be reasonable to ascertain one's daughter's problems and then do whatever was necessary to help her. If after the husband's death, however, there seemed to be no problem, and the family seemed to have some property, one should be resolved not to appear as a meddler to the father-in-law. This is also the righteousness of a warrior.

A man is sure to be criticized by others as being unreasonable if he carries on private conversations with his daughter while her child is still young, thus acting as a guardian.

Finally, there are times when the house of a main family, a certain lineage, or a household master sinks into decline and falls without a trace. It is the true intention of a warrior never to treat the persons involved badly, but to help reestablish the original line, and periodically to show interest and sympathy toward the family's problems.

To look at a man's circumstances and respect him if he seems prosperous, even though he is undeserving of respect, or to hold a man in contempt if he is in decline, even if he is not a contemptible person, is the nature of townspeople and farmers. This is not the righteousness of a warrior.

These words are for the understanding of those intending to be warriors.

CHAPTER 20

# Slander of a Former Lord Is Taboo

A samurai may intend to stay with the clan of the lord he is serving for generations, yet something happens and he separates himself from it. He then receives the assistance of another lord and begins to serve him—easily enough if there are no difficulties between himself and his former lord, but even if there is some problem and he must make various apologies to leave the first lord. This is the proper decorum of the martial clans of both past and present.

If, through such events, one becomes the retainer of another lord, though he grows acquainted and familiar with the new clan's senior samurai and meets in intimate conversation with them, he should never slander the clan of his former lord, even in jest.

Fixing this rule in one's heart is a primary accomplishment of a warrior.

The world is wide, and being born a Japanese warrior, a samurai will surely receive the blessings of one of the many greater or lesser lords in the four quarters of the country. One's children might be brought up and one's self taken care of while living within the clan grounds, and the promise of lord and retainer may come about, even if for only a little while, through some previous karma.

If this line of reasoning is understood, a samurai should not slander, even in jest, a man to whom he looked as lord even for just one day. It is on par with menials and footmen to be lacking this judgment, and to go about with an expression of knowing all the calumny concerning his former lord about whom society knows nothing, and to expose all manner of tales. Even if a man has committed some act of misconduct and is punished publicly, one should not slander the man if he is a former lord. Even if someone asks, trying to make one reveal something of the matter, it is the correctness of a warrior not to relate anything concerning that misconduct.

These words are for the understanding of those who would be warriors.

CHAPTER 21

# The Spirit of "Even Though a Warrior Doesn't Eat…"

Up to fifty or sixty years ago, when the many rōnin striving to come up in the world said, "I must be able to have at least two horses…" what they meant was, "I must have a stipend of over five hundred koku."[16] When they said something like, "If I could have at least one skinny nag…" what they meant was, "If I could have at least three hundred koku." Finally, if someone said, "If he would only let me carry one rusty spear…" what he meant was, "If I could receive a stipend, even of a hundred koku."

Up until that period, the old customs of the warriors remained, and these sayings came from not wanting to speak from one's own mouth definite numbers as to how much one would work for while moving up in the world. "Even when a samurai hasn't eaten, he will use a toothpick," and "A hawk will not peck grain, even when starving" are also sayings of that period. Young samurai did not speak of their own personal gains and losses, nor did they talk about prices. When they heard talk of women and sex, they turned bright red.[17] Men who wanted to become real samurai, even though it was out of their reach, yearned after the spirit of the old-style warriors and wanted to learn to be like them. The warrior's disposition could not accommodate life at the expense of pride.

These words are for the understanding of those intending to become warriors.

CHAPTER 22

# Rules for a Guardian

In the battles that occurred during the Warring States period in our country, there were samurai who accomplished great feats and died being struck down in combat, or who died receiving wounds from which they never recovered. The provincial lords and generals felt great sympathy for such men, and if the men had sons even less than a year old, arrangements were made so that their heirship would be provided for. If the child were not yet of age to serve in battle, the lord might order one of the deceased's younger brothers who was a rōnin[18] to take temporary charge of his older brother's property and act as guardian to his child while the child was yet underage. Such a position was called *jindai* [陣代], although nowadays it is referred to as a *bandai* [番代].

There are ancient rules for the warrior who takes up such a responsibility.

Because this is a matter of the succession of an older brother's heirship, it is natural that the child should be viewed as the guardian's own, even though he is a nephew. The youngster should be treated with true sympathy and given a good upbringing. Moreover, as the guardian should take charge of his brother's inheritance at that time, it is essential that he gather not just the armor and tack, but all the other various goods into one place, and select someone in the family to carefully examine the property and record it all in detail in a notebook.

Now when the child safely reaches the age of fifteen, it is proper that the guardian present the documents to the lord, giving him a clear account of the situation and explaining that the child will be sixteen years of age the following year and, while still young, should now be prepared to be of good use as a warrior. He will also explain that he, as the guardian, now wishes to hand over the stipend, which he has overseen until this time, to the rightful heir in hope that he will be of good service to the lord.

At that time, depending on the lord, the guardian's request might be

granted, but he might also be ordered to continue in such service for another two or three years, due to the heir's youth. It is obviously essential that the guardian decline, regardless of the gravity of the lord's order. When his request is granted, he should hand over all his brother's property that was recorded in the notebook, from the beginning to the last nail. This should not be limited to the materials he put in order while guardian, but everything he was put in charge of during that time should be turned over to the heir.

It may happen that a guardian is put in charge of an inheritance of five hundred koku, for example, and that the lord offers to give the heir three hundred koku of that sum and the guardian the remaining two hundred in view of his years of guardianship. It is essential that the guardian strongly express that this would be good fortune beyond his desserts, but that to deplete his brother's household would cause it hardship; and that he request the lord to order all the stipend handed down to the rightful heir, and grant him, the guardian, permanent leave.

Such should be the true intentions of a warrior who is called a guardian.

The true intentions of a warrior who is called a guardian are not to withhold the inheritance of a nephew who has reached the age of serving in his first battle, or, though turning it over, to have allowed for the loss of his elder brother's property, or for the house to become run down without repairing it; to make up loans and accounts that his brother did not pay and press these against his nephew; or to sponge off his young nephew by importuning him for rice allowance or money.

This is something that should be understood.

These words are for the notice of those intending to be warriors.

CHAPTER 23

# Frugality, Too, Is for the Sake of Service

It is essential that a warrior in service of a lord always be frugal regardless of his rank and employ considerable judgment in conserving his family finances. Even if a warrior does spend his stipend on something unprofitable and runs through his money once, if he quickly changes his way of thinking, economizes here and curtails expenses there, pays close attention to everything and lives in simplicity, he will repair his finances in no time at all if he has anything put aside.

If a man of humble position imitates those in the higher ranks, putting his resources into useless things and damaging his finances when he has no savings, his affairs will steadily decline. Thus, no matter how much he tries to economize, it will be of no use. As time passes, he will wear out his finances to the point where he can go neither forward nor backward. This is inevitable.

Moreover, people should keep the circumstances of their home finances a secret. On the other hand, as a man is employed, he should be on the same level as his comrades, and thus, inevitably, will have to make expenditures. In such a situation, if there is nothing else to be done, he will exhaust his wit in various contrivances, saying things he shouldn't say, doing things he shouldn't do, and gaining a reputation as a man learned in insincerity and lacking in shame. These things and the rumors that arise about them ultimately stem from mismanagement of one's finances.

A warrior of humble rank should be resolved to this from the very beginning. He should live according to his means, employ judgment in not making expenditures on useless things, and spend money only when he must. This is the way of frugality.

There is, however, something a warrior should be mindful of in this matter

of frugality. When men of either high or low rank think of nothing but frugality, begrudge making expenditures, cut down on their cost of living, and esteem only austerity, their finances soon take a turn for the better, and the more they hold on to the money they didn't have before, the more they rejoice in its gradual increase and are pained by its passing from their hands. As time passes, with such shabby hearts they do not do what they ought to do and, lacking all sense of ceremony, think only of the accumulation of money.

This is what is known as being miserly. Such a quality among farmers and merchants is one thing, but a miserly warrior is completely useless and a man to be despised.

The thing we hold far more precious than money is our one life. And yet, there are many in this world of such despicable character that they regret using their money above their sense of duty. How much more, then, will they be incapable of acting on the principle that would have them throw away that one irretrievable life?

This is the understanding concerning the use of frugality.

These words are for the notice of those intending to be warriors.

CHAPTER 24

# It Is Shameful Not to Know the Clan History

It is best that a warrior in service should have a deep and detailed knowledge of the origin of his lord's clan, the facts concerning the generations of the clan's ancestors, and the stories concerning all the lineal relations to the lord. He should also know the background of those family retainers who are famous throughout the area. This goes without saying for men who have served a long time, but also applies to newcomers.

The reason for this is that one may be seated talking with a man from another clan and be questioned concerning his lord's lineage. If he had neither understanding nor knowledge of that subject, he would be perceived as rather shallow, regardless of what a fine retainer he might generally seem to be.

These words are for the consideration of those intending to be warriors.

CHAPTER 25

# Companions in Play Are Unnecessary

It is essential for a warrior who is serving as a retainer to be familiar, both in private and in public, and intimate daily with those among his many comrades who are brave, love duty and honor, have wisdom and wit, and are well-spoken. Such warriors are rather few among his colleagues in the clan, but even one or two such men are more than a match for any number of the rest of his friends. Such men are reliable in any situation. Generally, however, warriors do not choose their friends, and the way they will join up with anyone, frequently meeting over food and drink, is not a good thing.

For intimacy in the relationships of warriors, there should be cordiality and a mutual ascertaining of each other's characters over a period of many days. Meeting temporarily, however, and in too free and easy a manner, saying things like, "Hey, that's interesting!" or "What a pal!" is not the way one warrior deals with another. Being extremely discourteous and unmannerly, falling all over each other throughout the night singing ballads and songs from puppet plays, is not the correct way to behave. Often, just when men think it fine to call each other "buddy" and "chum," there is violence over some small matter, the relationship is ruptured, and there is no one to set it right. In the end, neither man is of the clear disposition to renew the friendship.

Although outwardly such men may appear to be warriors, their minds would seem to be the same as those of laborers and coolies. A warrior should have a sense of shame and prudence.

These words are for the understanding of those intending to be warriors.

CHAPTER 26

# A Splendid Entrance, but Plain Living Quarters

When a samurai in service is having a house given to or built for him by his lord, it is most reasonable that the appearance of the outer gate and entrance and the formal sitting room be rather splendid, yet in accordance with the man's social position.

In any castle town—even for the homes of samurai living outside the castle precincts—when the quarters of all the samurai have a pleasing look to the stranger or foreigner who passes by, the place itself will seem prosperous and all the retainers settled. This will also perhaps be beneficial to the lord.

Beyond that, it is reasonable to be resolved not to spend much on construction for the area where one's wife and children will stay, and to endure any sort of shabbiness, as long as the rain does not leak in.

Speaking specifically, during the Warring States period even the *daimyo* who were lords of castles constantly kept the possibility of a siege in mind. Accordingly, there were definite regulations keeping the houses low, the area between the rafters narrow, and the construction expenses light, even for the residences attached to the secondary and tertiary citadels. How much more so, then, for the houses of those samurai living by the outermost ramparts? When faced with untoward events, they would burn and destroy their houses themselves, and thus did not build them to last forever. For this reason, extremely light construction is said to be "built like residences around the castle."

Knowing this, it is difficult to say that it is a good thing for a samurai set on being a warrior, even in the present times of peace, to run the length and breadth of things he enjoys in the construction of his house, adding an excess of materials and thinking that he will live there forever.

Moreover, when one experiences something like an unexpected disaster by

fire, there are difficulties in leaving the remains as an empty residence even for a short while, and it would thus be imperative to quickly build oneself a fitting, small hut. When a man enjoys using construction materials to excess and then gets deeply into debt for them, it can be said that he behaves improperly.

These words are for the understanding of those intending to be warriors.

CHAPTER 27

# Discerning a Brave Man from a Coward

When speaking of bushidō, the three qualities considered essential are loyalty, integrity, and courage. When these three virtues are perfectly combined in one man, he is called a samurai of the highest quality. It is easy to link the three in one breath, but a weighty matter to understand them in one's heart and then put them into practice. It has been said since ancient times that it is rare to find a samurai of the highest quality even among a hundred or a thousand warriors.

In this connection, it is an easy thing to discern a warrior of loyalty or a man of integrity, as these qualities appear in his everyday behavior. But there is some doubt whether a man of ordinary courage can be distinguished in this uneventful period of peace. Such doubt, however, is not justified. The reason is that the courage of a warrior is not exhibited for the first time when he dons his armor, takes up spear and halberd, faces the field, and is locked in battle. A man's ordinary life at peace reflects his courage or cowardice just like a mirror.

How is this so? A man born with a sense of courage will advance in high spirits all that is good, and avoid in the same way all that is bad. In his dealings with his lord and parents he will make his endeavors with unparalleled loyalty and filial piety. Having the least bit of spare time, he will put his mind to Learning and will not be negligent in his practice of the martial arts. Being careful to avoid extravagance, he will dislike wasting even a penny. It should not be thought, however, that this is due to a mean or shabby spirit, because for necessary things he will spend without regret sums with which others would not part. As for places or activities forbidden by his lord's house laws or disliked by his parents, he will not go to them no matter how much he may want to and will desist from such activities no matter how

difficult they may be to stop.

In all events, he will not turn his back on the desires of his lord or parents. He will protect his health fully and keep in mind the desire to perform at least once in his life a great meritorious deed. Having such a disposition, he will be deeply mindful of his own constitution and be moderate in his desires for food and drink. He will steer clear of and be prudent in matters of sex, that primary deluder of men, and other than that, will endure anything. All these demonstrate a man's courage.

A coward, on the other hand, will respect his lord and parents on the surface only, but will not really value them at all. He will give no thought to the house laws of his lord or to the aversions of his parents, but rather will walk about the places he shouldn't and do things he ought not, putting his self-indulgence before anything else. This man will enjoy sleeping in the morning and sleeping at noon, and will greatly dislike anything connected with Learning. Even in his performance of the martial arts, which are the calling of a warrior, he will be completely lacking in discipline. Practicing a little of this and a little of that, he will speak knowingly of his pride in the arts, regardless of his deficiency in them.

He will waste, without a thought of the future or the past, the little bit of stipend he may receive, spending any amount of money on sumptuous meals or useless and idiotic things. With anything else he will be stingy and tight-fisted. He will not even consider repairing the enameled lattice cords of the old armor he received from his parents, much less update or repair the deficiencies in his indispensable armor and tack. Such a man gives no consideration to that fact that becoming ill, he would not be able to serve his lord and would cause his parents anxiety and hardships. Thus, he indulges in gluttony and overdrinking, giving himself up to lasciviousness and chipping away at the fiber of his existence. These all arise from a weak and irresolute mind, a mind unable to endure things for long. It would not be far off the mark to judge these things as symptoms of a cowardly, weak-hearted warrior.

Thus, one can distinguish with no confusion the brave man from the coward, even in times of peace and tranquility.

These words are for the consideration of those who would be warriors.

CHAPTER 28

# Braggarts, Not Slanderers

Among the oral traditions of the samurai of old, it was said that a samurai endeavoring to be a real warrior should not speak badly of the provincial lords and doctors in the world. Although the person himself may not be involved, it may happen that one of his relatives or kinsmen seeks employment within the criticized lord's domain. At such a time, people who know that a man has spoken badly of the lord may wonder how it has been allowed that his kinsman may seek employment with him. Their scorn will be unavoidable.

Moreover, though one may not send someone from his own house to the doctor he has spoken ill of, a friend or relative may become extremely ill and then recover totally through that doctor's treatment. At such a time, one would have to thank the doctor with great ceremony and courtesy for curing that person.

Such things happen, and one should be mindful of them.

If a warrior will keep such things in mind, there should be relatively few things to regret in his life. There are people, however, who have little understanding of this principle. They make superficial judgments on events, rattle on about anything that comes to mind, and, without any reservations or thoughts about what may happen later, spread rumors concerning those with whom they have absolutely no connection. Such people become well-known as slanderers and scandalmongers, and in the end their failure is due to the lack of close examination and understanding of bushidō.

Now, if a man found out for certain that someone was speaking badly of him, he would react by feeling the action to be unreasonable and possibly the result of some grudge; and he would likely consider the man who speaks ill of another behind his back to be unlike a samurai, and rather shabby and insolent indeed. Moreover, no matter how much this might be considered simply backbiting, there may be times, according to the circumstances, when

it cannot be ignored. For although a man may try to overlook and ignore such gossip, it is certain that it will remain long in his heart and give him rancorous thoughts.

When a warrior is feeling this way, no matter how badly another is speaking of him, it is best to understand that simpletons unworthy of thought or blame are the only people who engage in this behavior.

In this connection, one should understand that although a braggart and a slanderer seem to be alike, they are greatly different.

Among the warriors of long ago, there were many who had reputations of being braggarts. Among the chief retainers of the shōgun, men such as Matsudaira Kagaemon and Okubo Hikozaemon were great braggarts, and in those times, there were at least three to five samurai who were considered braggarts in the clans of all the provincial lords. They had distinguished themselves in meritorious martial deeds and were matchless in the ways of bushidō.

However, because they were prone to misunderstanding their own times and possessed of a certain stubbornness, they lacked people with whom to converse, and, although they had reputations as warriors, they received no fiefs or positions. They considered this unfair, became warped and prejudiced, and said whatever they liked, regardless of who was listening. Nevertheless, the lord, clan elders, and chief retainers treated these men as exceptions and overlooked these things. Thus, the men became more and more willful, lost all manners and reserve, spoke about the good and evil of others to their hearts' content, and passed their entire lives as blusterers.

But when these men were young, they had accomplished military feats that ordinary men could not, gained confidence in their own abilities, and bragged accordingly.

Today, with the world at peace, no matter how brave men may be born, there is no place where they might establish their merits and hence reputations. Thus, without the experience of having fastened on their armor once, men will sit down with their cronies and talk about the faults of their lord's clan, criticize the clan elders, and talk their fill about their associates, thinking themselves to be very clever while they are nothing but fools. The difference between them and the braggarts of long ago is as between day and night or black and white. Those of today we call slanderers and half-wits.

These words are for the understanding of those intending to be warriors.

CHAPTER 29

# Both Contradiction and Flattery Are a Failure of Duty

There may be times when a warrior serving a lord will be on duty near his master and be asked for his opinion concerning his own functions or other outside matters. At such a time, when the man gives his general opinion and his lord disagrees with him, if he thinks the lord's thinking is unreasonable, he should listen prudently, end the matter by saying that his own thoughts were erroneous, and wait until the lord is in a better frame of mind. When the situation is conducted in this way, the lord may reconsider and change his thoughts on the matter, to his benefit.

A man's position should dictate whether he should have compunction in repeatedly contradicting the lord and telling him that he is wrong. Generally, for a retainer not connected personally to the clan, such action is considered extremely impolite and is not done, no matter how a man may think it helpful to the lord.

However, there is nothing more outrageous and disloyal than to seemingly change one's own opinion and flatteringly agree with the lord, admitting one's mistake, wanting only to be in the lord's good graces while knowing in one's mind that his opinion is contrary to reason.[19] It is a primary consideration of a warrior in service not to indulge even a hairbreadth of his desire to curry the lord's favor. When he has worked diligently in his own duties and has still not come into the lord's favor, he should be resolved that it is a matter of his own unavoidable fate. This is one of the basic intentions of a warrior in service.

These words are for the understanding of those intending to be warriors.

CHAPTER 30

# There Is Nothing So High-Priced as a Warrior

For upper-class warriors it goes without saying, but for those of the lower classes as well, a samurai who receives a fitting stipend from his lord and serves in his allotted duties should never, even for a moment, consider his body or his life as his own.

The reason is as follows.

In the warrior class, there are two kinds of men who serve. The attendants and footmen below the foot soldiers, for example, receive small stipends and rice allowances although they work to exhaustion both day and night. On the other hand, no one in this class is required to give up his one precious life in the service of his lord. Thus, he will not be accused of outrageous conduct even if he were to flee or show cowardice in the warrior's most important place of service: the battlefield. However, can it be said that service lies only in selling one's efforts?

A warrior is a man who is determined to serve with the primary understanding that he will give up his one important life for his lord. Thus, although he does not have to work himself to exhaustion like those in the lower positions, at the time when his general is in need, he will not move one foot in retreat and will die a resplendent death, or he will stand in front of his lord or general, with his own body stopping the arrows loosed by the enemy. That the lord values this highly and looks out for his men, always giving them generous stipends, is natural when the country is at war. But today, when the world is at peace, there are no such needs, and there is nothing so costly as a warrior.

The reason is, and this goes without saying for a warrior of high position, that over a period of ten years even a small stipend of a hundred koku becomes a salary of one thousand koku. How much, then, has been received

over the decades of a man's father's and grandfather's generations, and how much money would this total? In this way, it is essential to consider carefully the depths of the lord's favors as well as his intentions in supporting his retainers.

And what are those intentions? It is not that the lord is unconcerned about the great expenditure involved in the yearly disbursement of large stipends to the samurai of the clan, both high and low. But thinking of the men who served in former times of strife, he knows that in the event of some unexpected disturbance, generals must be outfitted and troops put in the field, and that should such a thing happen to him, his military needs would be considerable.

For a fief of one hundred thousand koku, for example, the troops and material requested by the shōgunate would be one hundred and seventy thousand mounted men, sixty foot soldiers equipped with bows, three hundred and fifty foot soldiers equipped with rifles, one hundred and fifty spears, and retainers to the general. As to the number of troops above that, it would be according to that general's ability and thoughts on the matter. Moreover, after this number of troops has been mustered and taken to the front, the castle cannot be left open to itself; a sufficient number of men must be left behind to guard it and keep it strong and defensible in case of an emergency. When one plans for such situations, he usually thinks that the clan has many people, but when the emergency arises, men will be in short supply.

Also, it is natural to think that, because this is a period of peace and there are many warriors without masters, should an emergency arise it would be easy to hire them quickly. But whether a person's position is high or low, what is important to them is familiarity. Of course, as these men are warriors, they should not be lacking in usefulness, even if hastily employed. But if a warrior is not imbued with many years of the lord's generous favors and the receipt of his daily kindness, if he has not brooded over the desire to be of some service and to repay the lord's kindnesses, then he will not stand in true usefulness at the time of greatest need.

Provincial lords and generals think in this way, and so will employ a great number of samurai of both high and low rank, even though they may have little need of them in ordinary times.

Now, among the many samurai whose families have been in the clan for generations, there may be some who are ill-favored or naturally inept or apparently stupid. But the lord will look upon these men with generous supervision and grant them stipends without discrepancies. In times of

emergency, because of the kindness and familiarity shown them in the past, these men will not think twice about putting their lives on the line. The provincial lords and generals' thinking is that such men's potential usefulness and future good works are a great treasure to be relied upon.

If this is so, then a retainer must not only surmise the inner thoughts of his lord, but should also investigate thoroughly what his own thoughts and intentions should be as a man in service.

As the roles of guard, attendant, and messenger are the mundane duties of a warrior in times of peace, it would be difficult to call them the service of a warrior of real note. But if some unexpected event were to occur tomorrow, and one has practiced the martial arts with the intention of encouraging others with unsurpassed loyalty; has the proper number of men, horses, and armor prepared; and has resolved in his heart, with the war god Marishiten[20] as his witness, to be the first on the field during attacks on open areas, to be the first over the wall in attacks on castles,[21] and to take the hindmost position if one's allies are in retreat,[22] allowing no others these positions regardless of the number of samurai in one's group, he will have the intentions of a warrior of service.

Moreover, beyond grounding himself in these intentions, a warrior must consider neither his body nor his life as his own and know that it is difficult to judge at just what moment he will be of use to his lord. He will therefore value his life even more and avoid neglecting his health by overeating, heavy drinking, or sexual excess. He will want to prolong his life by at least one more day, knowing that he should sacrifice it in performing at least one valuable service for his lord. In this way, he will not consider dying in bed of disease as his true intention. Even more will he be resolved and careful in the knowledge that it would be extreme disloyalty and unrighteousness to become involved in senseless fights and arguments, cutting down his friends and associates and losing his own life.

A man's great care, then, should be to avoid speaking loosely. For the most part, it is despicable for a warrior to use many words. When those who do not understand this engage in useless talk, an argument develops; and when the argument grows heated, a fight occurs; and when this happens there will be abusive language. And it stands to reason that when two warriors exchange abusive language, there is one chance in a million that the affair will end without incident. Therefore, a man who understands this before an argument begins, who has considered his life devoted to his lord from the beginning, and who controls his anger is called a warrior of loyalty and a man of discrimination.

Now among one's many associates within the clan there are likely to be some who are either crazy or fools. When a fool speaks unreasonably, people around him will act as though they don't hear him and will avoid his presence. This only makes him think that others are afraid of him, and he becomes more puffed up, spitting out all sorts of offensive language, and in the end speaking insufferable abuse to everyone.

When such an incident happens to a warrior, it is considered a terrible disaster. If by chance a warrior should happen into such circumstances, he should quickly consider while under the abuse, calm his mind and heart, judge the conditions of the place and time, and if there are obstacles to settling the matter right there, leave and return to his residence. He should then finish both his official and his private affairs, and make sure that he cherishes no more thoughts of this world in his heart. With those associates who were there as witnesses, he should write up a document, take revenge, and then commit *seppuku.*[23] Or he may invite an investigation, then commit seppuku, and this will be satisfactory to all parties. His associates will be impressed that his actions were reasonable, and they will surely be considered admirable in the lord's mind as well.

And will this not serve as a sort of apology for disloyalty as well?

The young men without such thoughts, however, will be carried away by the anger of the moment and clash with the fool, meeting a sudden and meaningless death. This is simply because such men do not know that the life of a warrior is dedicated to his lord and is not something of his own.

This is something that should be very well placed in one's heart.

These words are for the notice of those intending to be warriors.

CHAPTER 31

# Do Not Forget Sensitivity to the Discomfort of Others

When a warrior in service is living either at his own home or at the fief's boardinghouse, and one among his compatriots in the area is gravely ill or has some cause for distress, even though he may not be on intimate terms with the man, the warrior should be strictly circumspect concerning things like loud laughter and music. He should also instruct his wife, children, and servants on the matter without fail.

This is not entirely out of consideration for the man in distress, but is prudent for avoiding the contempt of all one's compatriots and the slander of being both unceremonious and rude.

These words are for the understanding of those intending to be warriors.

CHAPTER 32

# The Warrior Who Strikes His Wife Is a Coward

When the wife of a true warrior does something that is not in accord with his wishes, the most reasonable thing is to give her an explanation of what is right so that she will understand well and, if it is a small matter, forgive her and be patient. If, however, he feels that she is extremely ill-tempered and likely to be of little use, he should divorce her and return her to her parents. This is yet another thing.[24]

On the other hand, a man who does not do this but, because she is his wife, raises his voice in abusive and insulting language at a person whom others call “madam” and “my lady,” acts in the manner of day laborers who live in the back streets. Such behavior is not to be expected from a warrior. Flailing about with his sword or striking her with his fists is unspeakably outrageous and the act of a coward. Specifically, consider the age of the daughter of a warrior when she is ready for marriage. Although a man of that age is extremely unlikely to accept being struck, it is a woman’s plight to endure while being made to shed tears.

As a rule, the unfair act of seeking out an opponent who is unable to fight back is hardly the deed of a brave warrior. That man is a coward who loves to do the things a valiant warrior hates and does not do.

These words are for the understanding of those intending to be warriors.

CHAPTER 33

# Complete Your Duties Within the Day; One Second Ahead Is Uncertain

For a warrior serving a lord, there is a primary understanding concerning the execution of his daily duties, as difficult and unending as they are: namely, it is important to resolve to do one's duties within the day allotted, rather than thinking that one will have unlimited time in the future. For men in this uncertain world, neither high nor low can tell what tomorrow may bring.

This being so, it is difficult to judge what unforeseen event may occur between master and servant. If nothing untoward happens, such a relationship may continue for many years to its natural conclusion. But when a man is resolved at least to complete the duties of each day, he will not suffer from boredom or neglect anything, and he will be mindful of doing things within the time allotted. Thus, he will be diligent and without carelessness or lapses of memory.

However, if one thinks that the world will go on without change and that he will have unlimited time in which to perform his duties, as time passes he will become bored with things, his mind will become slack, and his spirit will become negligent. He will put off until tomorrow not only his lord's more pressing concerns, but also those that should be quickly discussed and concluded. Thus, matters will pile up and be neglected.

Moreover, brushing off this comrade and throwing blame on another, he will have no one to come to his aid, and his affairs will not only become distasteful but will also increase. In the end, there will be many matters left unsettled.

These are all matters that occur from the neglectful mind that does not understand that a warrior's duties should be done on the day allotted, but rather relies on the days and months ahead. One should pay close attention to

this.

Now a warrior whose duties are fixed to a certain number of days in a row each month should be resolved that, if the shift of the duties comes at 6:00 P.M., he should know the distance between his domicile and the lord's establishment, note the length of the day, and always leave a little early, no matter what the circumstances might be. One should understand this well.

To be resentful about having to leave for the assigned place of duty and idle about, having one more cup of tea, one more smoke at the pipe, or a little conversation—first with his wife and then with his children—time passes on, and a man will leave his home late, hurrying along the road in a confused state and disregarding what passersby may think. He will burst into his office sweating profusely, using a fan even in the dead of winter, and make up a poor excuse about being late because of some unavoidable business. This will sound like a theatrical farce to anyone with sense.

Being on duty at the lord's establishment is foremost among a warrior's duties because he is guarding the lord's residence, even if just for a short while. Thus, one should never be late due to his own personal affairs, regardless of what the circumstances may be.

Moreover, even if a samurai understands this and arrives at work early, it is extremely unbecoming to be restless and yawn when his replacement is late, acting as though he cannot stand to be in the lord's establishment a bit longer and as if he wants to return home soon. A warrior should be prudent about this.

It is reasonable for a samurai to ask relief from his duties when his parents are so ill that he should be there to look after them. When a child is ill, it depends on the man's position and circumstances. This is because a parent, regardless of his status, cannot help feeling uneasy at a child's illness; but if he is of the position to assign one or two retainers to look after the child in his stead, and if the illness is not too grave, there is not sufficient reason to be absent from his post. It is yet another thing if a warrior of low status has no steady retainer to look after the child.

Above all, it is totally out of the question for a warrior of low position, much less one of a high position, to be absent from his official duties with the excuse that his wife is sick. However, staying home may be reasonable if her illness is grave, or if he reports that he himself has contracted a disease and must not go out.

These words are for the notice of those intending to be warriors.

CHAPTER 34

# Cherish the Lord's Family Crest

There are times when a warrior who is serving in attendance may receive by his lord's wishes a ceremonial robe or ceremonial undergarment to which is affixed the lord's family crest. It is important to understand that when wearing the undergarment with the lord's crest, one should wear a ceremonial robe with his own crest, and when wearing the ceremonial robe with the lord's crest, he should wear the ceremonial undergarment with one's own crest. If he should wear both garments with the lord's crest, he would appear to be on the same level as the close relatives of the lord, and this would be extremely discourteous—first to the lord, and second to his family. Moreover, were the other retainers to see this, they would likely wonder when the man had been permitted by the lord to be so privileged; and knowing that he had not been, they would censure him as both extremely discourteous and a fool. The reason is that the ordinances of various clans strictly forbid the simultaneous wearing of the ceremonial undergarment and the robe that are fixed with the lord's family crest.

When the ceremonial undergarment one has received has become old and is no longer wearable, one should cut off the lord's family crest and then burn the garment. In the case of warriors of low rank, their wives and servants are ordered to wash old undergarments; and, being women, without a thought they will make an old garment embroidered with the lord's family crest into a cloth lining for the waist down, and from that into bedclothes or underwear. Desecrating the lord's family crest in this way, one will lose divine favor and inadvertently incur the master's punishment. It is conventional wisdom that one will also incur troublesome diseases affecting the body from the waist down, such as infected buttocks or boils on the shins. But even if such disasters do not befall him, the man who understands the duties of a warrior will be strictly and reverently circumspect in this matter.

These words are for the consideration of those who would be warriors.

CHAPTER 35

# The Warrior's Duty Is to Protect the Farmer, the Craftsman, and the Merchant

There was a certain person who said the following:

"Long, long ago there was no warrior class, and the world got along with only the classes of farmer, craftsman, and merchant. Presently, robbers and thieves arose from among them, bringing them distress and pain. Because even the united strength of the three classes was insufficient to protect them, they gathered in conference and elected from the farmers men of good lineage and character. These they called 'samurai' [士], had them discontinue their farming, and fully provided them with food, clothing, and shelter. Established for protecting the three classes from disasters caused by the robbers and thieves, they were placed above the other members of society, who respected them highly and now called them 'honorable samurai' [侍].

"These samurai stopped using the spade and hoe, and now, for the sake of castigating the robbers and thieves, became skillful in the fields of archery and horsemanship, and in the handling of spears and long swords. The robbers and thieves became fearful of this and, establishing themselves in great numbers in the forested mountains and dark valleys, they erected strongholds and provisioned themselves with the proper armaments so as not to be killed so easily.

"The warriors of the various areas then met together as one force in one place, appointed one samurai as general, and placed themselves under his orders and instructions. Practicing various measures and military strategies, they advanced to the area of the robbers and thieves and defeated them. The members of the three classes of society rejoiced greatly, set their minds at rest, and regarded the samurai as officials of all the greater value. After other

such situations, something occurred to establish the practice of having four social classes—warrior, farmer, craftsman, and merchant—and this was the beginning of the warrior clans."

Being an unlearned man, I cannot judge the validity of this theory. In contemporary society, however, it is not so disagreeable among the warriors for a man to stop farming and become a warrior, and neither does it harm a samurai in the least to leave the martial class and engage in agriculture, for he may once again take up being a warrior. Yet, it is difficult for a man from the craftsman or merchant classes to become a warrior, and a matter of course that a warrior cannot leave his class to become a craftsman or merchant even for a day and later come back to his martial duties. When one considers these facts, the above theory can be thought to have some foundation.

This being so, there is no doubt that the function of the warrior is to bring peace of mind to the other members of society. Thus, it is unreasonable for men called warriors to act in unjust and excessive ways toward the other three classes. This goes without saying for those of high rank but also concerns men of lower status.

Yet, it happens that farmers are taxed unreasonably and crushed under excessive corvées.[25] Goods are ordered from craftsmen who are paid neither for their materials nor their labor, and procured from the livelihood of merchants who are ignored when it comes to payment. Money is borrowed and men make their living in idleness. Such acts should be decried as great injustices, far amiss from the true intentions of a warrior.

One must understand this point well and have a bit of sympathy toward the farmers of the region and not oppress the class of tradesmen. Concerning the borrowed money that is the livelihood of the merchant class, if a man cannot repay it all at once, he should send it back bit by bit, taking care not to cause damage or inconvenience.

It is essential that the warrior does not imitate the very robbers and thieves it is his function to punish.

These words are for the attention of those intending to be warriors.

CHAPTER 36

# Keep a Respectful Distance from the Administration of Financial Affairs

It should be clearly understood that even though a warrior is ordered to perform various duties by the will of his lord, he should avoid as much as possible duties concerned with financial administration.

An official involved in financial administration must not in the least way distress the people in the castle town or the farmers in the surrounding villages, much less the officials of any rank within the clan; at the same time, he must manage finances in a way to ensure his lord's power. Through such good works, this official is truly of great service to his lord.

However, it is difficult to do well in such work with only normal wisdom and resources. For on the one hand, if an official thinks solely in terms of his lord's best interests, people below him will be troubled and put into difficult straits. On the other hand, if he thinks solely of the happiness of those below the lord, the lord's finances will certainly suffer. Thus, either one side or the other will come to harm. Therefore, it is said to be a duty with which a warrior should not be connected.

Moreover, no matter how intelligent and resourceful a warrior might be, greed is a disease that affects a person every day. Thus, when he is handling the lord's financial affairs, others need his services constantly, and he handles cash accounts freely, he gradually becomes conceited, shows signs of wanting to lord it over others, and begins to live a life beyond his social status. In this way, even without being aware of it, he begins to show favoritism, accounts do not balance out, and he feeds his greed by embezzlement. Eventually this is found out and he brings ruin upon himself; this much is certain. Such a person is called a "thieving official."

On the other hand, what if such an official is not motivated by greed, favoritism, or embezzlement, but simply by the lord's interests? He may

work out various plans and laws contrary to those established by the clan, and without a thought to the troubles he might bring upon the ranks of the clan's officials, he levies heavy taxes on the townspeople and the farmers. Or, without a thought to what expenses the province might have in the future, or what disasters might occur among the people and bring problems to the management of the clan, he sets his eyes on immediate gain only and works out his schemes accordingly.

To this end he finagles with chief retainers, elders, and other officials who lack in wisdom, getting them to take up his plans. Now if things go well, he takes all the credit; but if his new laws turn out to be profitless and irreparable blunders, he hides in the shadow of those same officials, giving the impression that it was the fault of their orders and planning. Thus, he avoids punishment and keeps himself out of trouble. Such a man is called an "overtaxing official."

Now while the thieving official has committed unrighteous and nefarious acts in stealing his lord's property, and consequently received divine punishment, the affair has ended with his own downfall and the loss of his life. Others have not been affected with hardships or problems, the management of the lord's clan has come under no harm, and the province has suffered no real disasters.

The overtaxing official, on the other hand, is constantly thinking things up that will bring pain to all men and initiates policies that will be unbearable burdens to the provincial administration. Even though this official has no personal greed and commits no embezzlement, there is no greater criminal than a man like this. In the words of the Chinese sage, "It is better to have an official who steals than one who overtaxes."[26] So although receiving the name of a thieving official was considered the very worst evil that could befall a warrior, from the words of the sage we know that worse still is the official who overtaxes the people.

Thus, if the thieving official's punishment is decapitation, the overtaxing official should be crucified.

In the age of Confucius, the overtaxing official and the thieving official were considered as separate, and thus the saying comes to us as it is. In recent times, however, the overtaxing official, who makes such efforts to bring troubles and hardships to all those below him, commits the acts of a thieving official as well. By becoming essential to others by means of his authority, working out various clever schemes, embezzling the goods of others, and being shrewd, he lives a life of luxury well beyond his social position. Moreover, this man hordes the gold and silver people find so

difficult to obtain, and considers it nothing to make it public that this is for the lord's sake. In the meantime, he secretly finds ways of using it for his own and gaining unrighteous wealth. This man is a combination of the thieving and overtaxing officials, and could certainly be called a great thief. It is difficult to judge what sort of punishment would be due crimes of such enormity.

Such being the case, a man who makes efforts toward being a warrior, whether he depends on his strength from the gods or the buddhas, should hope never to be ordered to the duties of his lord's financial affairs.

Should such a position become available and one find himself wanting to try it out, he should restrain himself with fear, knowing that this is nothing other than an omen of the end of his luck as a warrior. The effect will be the same as a mud buddha playing with water.[27]

These words are for the notice of those intending to be warriors.

CHAPTER 37

# Undertaking Promises Easily Will Bring One to Ruin

The man who would be a warrior must be extremely reliable if he seeks correctness in the martial way. However, if a samurai takes responsibility for something unreasonable, puts himself in a situation where he has no business, or takes up a matter in which his labors should not be involved, he will be known as an intruder and rumored to be a meddler. That is very poor indeed. It is most important that young men understand this.

A warrior should not become involved unless he is emphatically requested to, no matter how simple the affair may seem. The reason for this is that once he has committed himself to something as a warrior, whether it be simple or extremely difficult, he will have to involve himself and take pains and interest in the matter. And, depending on how the situation develops, being involved as he is, he may unavoidably have to give up his life. It is difficult enough to give one's life away for the sake of one's lord or family. Thus, it is useless to take on an air of reliability in such unreasonable circumstances.

When the warriors of old were requested to do something by others, they first considered whether it was a matter that could be accomplished or not and, if they thought it to be impossible, refused to take it up from the very first. If they thought it could be done, they committed themselves only after thinking through how the matter might be accomplished from beginning to end. Because of this, those things that they did undertake were, for the most part, put in good order, and circumstances rarely went against them. Thus, they were praised as men who accomplished what they set out to do.

It is certain, however, that a man will gain a reputation as one who never accomplishes anything if he gives no thought and quickly takes a matter on as soon as he is asked, having no consideration for the circumstances, and regardless of how unfavorable they may be.

Speaking one's mind or giving one's opinion is considered a virtue that arises from a reliable disposition and therefore desirable. However, one should think this over carefully. When a man is in the position of parent, teacher, elder brother, or uncle and addresses his child, student, younger brother, or nephew, it is not a matter of great concern, regardless of the opinion or thought he espouses. Yet, even in such circumstances, the words that pass from a warrior's mouth are weighty, and must be made with restraint and consideration. How much more, then, is it necessary to understand the extreme gravity of giving an opinion to friends and comrades?

When a person with whom one has been intimate for some time, be he a relative or not, comes with a problem he has been unable to solve and broaches the subject, asking how it might be dealt with, it is one thing to break the matter off from the very first, claiming to have no understanding of it. But once becoming the man's confidant, it is utterly correct, and for a warrior the most reliable action to take, to give him one's full opinion, without reserve and in accordance to reason, regardless of how it may run contrary to the other person's thoughts or feelings.

However, to be fainthearted and hesitate awkwardly while considering the correct words, so as not to hurt the man's feelings or frame of mind, will cause the discussion to meander. One who does this will make a man say things he should not or give him a mistaken course of action, and bring upon him the criticism and ridicule of others. This makes a warrior an unreliable and useless confidant and is, in the end, carelessness arising from an unreliable nature.

One thinks of himself as a man, and when involved in conversation should carry it on according to reason. If one does not do so, however, but acts only on one's personal feelings with a lack of judgment that is likely to cause harm, it is reasonable that people will avoid intimacy with him in the future.

When a warrior has become involved in discussion with a man, he should not concern himself with the man's feelings or moods, or turn his back on reason or go against logic, agreeing with everything the man says. Moreover, a warrior should use restraint, knowing that in the future he will be talked about by others as a confidant in the matter.

These words are for the notice of those intending to be warriors.

CHAPTER 38

# Do Not Forget the Subordinate's Mind

A warrior of low rank who is serving under a group leader through experience comes to understand the concerns of his superiors and the characteristics of his associates. He knows that, even if he makes a name and fortune for himself by advancing in life and taking charge of a group, he should always have sympathy for his subordinates and be of service to his lord. It is understood that at that time, not even a hairsbreadth of favoritism or partiality should be allowed into his considerations.

However, as one gradually comes up in the world and takes on the various important offices of group leader, he begins to have different concerns from those he had as a subordinate. Then sympathy for his own subordinates or the desire to be of service to his lord may slip from his considerations.

Even if a samurai's deeds are thought well of by his lord and he is promoted to some excellent position, if he never forgets his time in the lower ranks and bears in mind that man's happiness is hard to come by and easy to lose, he will naturally be without negligence. Being without negligence, he will be without extravagance; and if he will only do without extravagance, he should be able to avoid disaster.

Human nature is such, however, that nine out of ten people become proud when their situations take a turn for the better. This has always been so. Men such as Sakuma from the Oda clan and Uozumi from the Hashiba clan were excellent warriors when still of low rank. After they were promoted to high ranks, however, their mistakes multiplied, and they were abandoned by their lords and brought ruin upon themselves. These are examples from former times that warriors of low rank should keep in mind.

It should especially be noted that when a samurai whose personal service has not been outstanding, and whose natural abilities seem less than they are reputed to be, is promoted far beyond his associates from within a group of low-ranking men, it is certain to be talked about as simply a lack of scrutiny

by the group leaders or as a case of favoritism.

A samurai should never forget such things. And should he be promoted even to the offices of group leader, he should keep in mind the various characteristics of his subordinates and their years of service, never letting a hint of favoritism enter his mind. This is the proper and righteous way of managing a group and is the righteousness of a warrior.

Regarding this, there will likely be a samurai in one's group who neither has a particularly high personal character nor has been of much service. Yet he will have a relative or connection among the chief retainers, clan elders, or other ranking men who may secretly request the man's promotion in a way that is difficult to refuse. At such a time, one's response should be to the effect that nominations are made at the lord's pleasure, that any other request is an irregularity, and that writing out a promotion that does not conform with the group's investigation is just not done. One may continue that this is because in the management of a group no favoritism is shown and that those who head the group follow the lord's strict admonitions.

If one were to follow the man's request and turn his back on the law of his lord, operating behind his back, this would be going against the concerns of all the other subordinate samurai in the group. In the end, this would not be in the lord's interests. Finally, one might add that, although he is ignorant of the ways of other groups, this group's leaders get together for discussion, carefully examine the nominee's abilities and works, and choose the appropriate man. They then write a letter of recommendation to the lord and hope to gain his agreement.

The man should be refused thus, regardless of who he is. This is the proper carriage of a warrior who is a group leader or a general commanding samurai.

However, to say not a word on such an occasion and to do exactly as the man has spoken would be to lose the respect of one's subordinates and could be said to be both cowardice and ineptitude.

All these things arise from forgetting the consciousness one had as a low-ranking warrior putting his mind toward bettering his already improved situation, and from the flattery and insincerity that proceed from the desire for fame and wealth.

But if one turns his back on the instructions of a person to whom it is difficult to say no, responds as outlined here, and the situation still turns out badly and one is stuck in the middle, what then? It hardly needs explaining that "even if one's nose has been twisted, it is all right as long as he can still breathe."[28]

These words are for the understanding of those intending to be warriors.

CHAPTER 39

# Loyalty Includes Longevity

It is the basic intention of every man endeavoring to be a warrior to live out his life at least one more day to fulfill his duties. He must await the run of his fate, come up in the world without fail, advance the house of his ancestors, and leave lasting fame to his descendants. This goes without saying for men of high rank, but also concerns those of lower positions.

For a man with duties and services who has received many blessings from his lord, and who must support not only himself but also his family and even his servants, it is a matter of course that he be thoroughly resolved to make his life of some use to his lord at least once. This is the resolve of a sincere warrior. Thus, a warrior should understand that his health is of prime importance.

Now although such things as overeating, heavy drinking, and licentiousness are injurious to a samurai's health, they are not matters a man considers so harmful when young. Yet there are many cases in this world of men who died young from the disasters of ruined viscera, anemia, and internal injuries. A man who is mindful of this will pay attention to his health while he is yet young, of robust vigor, and without disease. He will avoid such things as overindulgence in food, drink, and sex. He might then live to the age of seventy or eighty years, retain suppleness of limb, and not be far inferior to a man in the prime of life. But a man who does not perceive this and engages in unhealthful activities may only sustain a life of forty or fifty years. Even if once in a great while such a man should survive a bit longer, he will be an invalid and his life will be worthless.

Especially after a man passes the age of fifty, he should place more and more importance on things that will replenish the health of his mind and body. He should restrain his eating and drinking and, of course, be extremely prudent with his sexual appetite. A man past the age of fifty who engages in the unhealthful activities of a youth is indiscreet and careless beyond

comprehension.

These mistakes arise entirely from the weakness of a samurai's aim toward the Way of the Warrior and the dimness of his consideration of loyalty and duty toward his lord. When one considers the deepest reason for these things, he finds that they come from a weakness in the spirit of forbearance. The lack of forbearance, no matter how highly regarded the man, is a symptom of cowardice.

One should take extreme care concerning these things.

CHAPTER 40

# A Man of Low Rank Should Not Have a Wife and Child

It is a great mistake for a man of low rank to have a wife and children when he is unable to support even a single attendant to carry his spear in times of emergency. There are those, however, among one's friends and relatives who will suggest that a wife is necessary because there will be times of illness, or because his clothes will need to be washed and his household affairs managed, or above all to have descendants. Giving in to self-indulgence and taking this differing opinion as truth, a man may give the matter no further thought, receive someone's daughter, and take her as his wife.

But in a truly short while, just when he is thinking how tranquil and satisfactory his everyday life has become, there will be babies born one after another. This will exhaust his income, and the one lackey he could afford will be let go in exchange for a child minder. Having no one to watch the house when he is absent, he will have to make his excuses and care for his wife and child when they are sick, neglecting his important duties. More and more his income will be exhausted, and he will be able neither to advance nor to keep up with his peers at the same level.

At such a time, nine men out of ten will not understand that these difficulties arose from their own selfish desire for an unnecessary wife and children, but will instead hold ridiculous grudges and discontent concerning their lord's lack of sympathy. If this point is well understood, it is clear that a warrior of low rank should act with extreme hesitation concerning the madness to have a wife and child.

While a warrior of low rank is still young, if he will single-mindedly and vigorously perform his duties, striving in his employment night and day, he will come up in the world appropriately according to his lord's will. Judging the proper time to raise a family, he will be able to consider the matter of

descendants later.

These words are for the understanding of warriors of low rank.

CHAPTER 41

# The Crime of Stealing a Stipend Is Grave

Thieves are men who will break in through the back gate of one's house, or cut the cord of the purse that hangs from one's waist, or commit various other thieveries saying that this is the way they make a living. Of course, this is very immoral. However, a saying of the ancients has it that a man who has no constant employment will have an inconstant mind. Although it is unprincipled, it may be understandable that when a man is destitute and has no other means, in his dulled mind he may think to ward off the moment's hunger and cold even if he must steal, in the full knowledge that it will cost him his head if he gets caught.

A man's social position and wealth are matters of the will of Heaven. Those who are resolved to find no pain in this, who will not seek happiness by evil means, and who think nothing of it even if they are soon to die of hunger and cold are not to be found, even in the class above the warriors. Thus, one might consider theft at least a little understandable.

Now, because a warrior who serves a lord, regardless of rank, carries both a surname and a sword, it would be difficult to regard him as an ordinary person. And, because he serves his lord and naturally receives a proper and generous stipend, it could not be said that he is without constant employment. It should be the warrior's intention then, being ordered to certain duties by his lord, to be carried out in ways defined by him through his judgment, to strive to do these things honestly and righteously, without the least bit of greed, and entirely for his lord's sake.

But there are those not the least so inclined, who approach their duties with unrighteousness, who steal from their lord by exchanging goods through trickery, and who, finding these acts difficult to carry out freely by themselves, make the subordinate scribes and even their own retainers steal

for them. With no shame of the criticism of subordinates or the scorn of their associates, such men construct houses and gather furnishings beyond their social positions. They do as they please, naturally employing a great number of servants and moving through life in a way that other men of their level cannot. Such men are robbers ten times the magnitude of the stealthy thief mentioned earlier.

Those called thieves are men who, taking things from others, do so in deep secret, and taking mostly things like purses or paper pouches from people who are unseen and unknown. But the thief of a warrior clan thinks nothing of stealing things from the lord from whom he has received favors and lives in a luxury far beyond his social position. It stands to reason that he treats his associates and fellows as eyeless and earless fools, and in the end, treats even his worthy lord as a bit of a fool. This is exactly why it is said that he is ten times guiltier than the stealthy thieves that roam the world.

Now, it is just this kind of unscrupulous person who, because he is capable of infinite cunning, finds a man of deep greed among the chief retainers and attendants who act as shrewd assistants and of whom the lord is fond. This man he bribes, and secretly enters his favor without anyone noticing, making of him a supporter and protector. With this complete authority, he causes his own associates and colleagues to remain silent even at places where formal decisions are made. Under the wing of his guarantor he does not hesitate to go anywhere, pushing into any situation, expressing his own views, and if he feels so inclined, giving his own prejudicial orders.

Though his associates give him up as arrogant and unscrupulous, they consider his present influence and fear his protector. In the end, because of their own weakness, there is no one who will come out and criticize him. Thus, he takes on the status of an able man, others go along with what he says, and as this situation continues, his associates and colleagues remain so in name only. In this way, he becomes an obstruction even to the administration of the state.

Relating to this, during the Ashikaga shōgunate [1392–1568] when the governor of Taga and Bungo was chief administrator in Kyoto, he requested the great painter Tosa Shogen to paint a picture of him. The portrait was to depict him as he looked when he was merely a common samurai by the name of Shinzaemon with the Sasaki clan in Goshu, long before. This portrait he hung in an alcove in his sitting room, looking at it day and night as an admonition to himself. When talking with the other officials, he would say that when in a fortunate position it was essential not to forget one's lowly past.

These words are for the understanding of warriors of lower rank.

CHAPTER 42

# Even if One's Stipend Is Diminished, He Should Make No Complaint

There will likely be a time when the lord whom a warrior is serving incurs a large expense that causes problems for the clan's financial administration and disrupts normal operations. The lord may wish to borrow for a few years a certain sum from the stipends ordinarily accorded to the clan's retainers. Regardless of how much the amount may be, a warrior should humbly comply and never let even a hint of complaint slip out in his conversations with his wife and children, much less in front of others. To do otherwise is not in the spirit of a warrior and is something to be avoided at all costs.

In times both present and past, when a lord suffers adversity, the retainers draw together and see him through; and when retainers are in distress, it is through the lord's strength that they are helped. This is the prescribed conduct of a warrior clan.

Moreover, when the lord's finances are overburdened, the problem may spill over into public life, so that he must put off anticipated activities and bear things patiently, living a lifestyle rather unexpected for a person of such high position. The retainers who witness this cannot help but feel sympathy and commiseration for their lord.

In normal times, such circumstances should not be too trying. However, when some event occurs—there is an unexpected disturbance—and the supreme command orders the troops gathered and dispatched shortly to such and such a place, the first thing that is needed for such preparation is money.

Now, even if there is an attempt to raise such money, the townspeople, who have been asked for funds so many times before and have been so inconvenienced, will not give their consent no matter what the officials say. When some disturbance occurs, the townspeople who usually take in come collateral and loan out money are nowhere to be found, and it is like having

one's hand caught between two rocks: one can go neither forward nor back.

Amid such a dilemma, with all the provincial lords being prepared, the date of departure is determined, and unlike other times cannot be put forward or set back. The lord's troops will have to move forward with insufficient preparation.

Well-equipped soldiers in array are a fine sight, and in times of peace the movement of troops is a rare spectacle; people will rent houses in the towns and villages and fill the mountains and fields, both high and low mixing together for a good look. If the men and horses of one's own clan look rather shabby in comparison with all the other troops, it is the unsurpassed shame of a lifetime for the lord or general. One cannot help but think that such situations are truly lamentable.

When thinking such important things over, a warrior can see that it is of utmost importance for a general to consider this beforehand and to adjust his finances in a way that will not cause problems. Money must be available not only for men, horses, and their respective equipment but for all situations. Thus, every warrior who has received the lord's favors, regardless of being a newcomer or an old hand, should be resolved to give up an appropriate portion of the stipend he receives as a samurai.

Therefore, while a man's yearly stipend is decreased, he should economize considerably and follow the lord's directives to keep fewer men and horses. He and his wife and children should wear cotton and paper clothing during the winter, and cloth and hemp garments during the summer; both morning and night the family should eat brown rice and miso soup; and he himself should drink water and cut firewood, and have his wife do the cooking. They should bear out this adversity with whatever strength they have until their lord's finances have improved. Such resolution is the basic intention of a warrior.

If for some reason a warrior wanted to take a long leave and become a rōnin, he should put that thought aside while the clan's finances are in bad straits; but when the proper stipends have been restored, he may ask for leave. This is true righteousness.

Furthermore, during such times of hardship and subtraction from yearly stipends, there may be an occasion when a warrior is needed for some service. At such a time, even if he should pawn his auxiliary sword or his wife's hand box, he should make do with only the necessary money and should not request any loans.

Even if the lord does not hear about it, the group leaders, chief retainers, or clan elders will, and will not think well of the situation. They will consider

such a man as holding secret motives while the clan's finances are reduced, and as scorning the lord in a manner not at all like a warrior. As follows, he will never be able to open his mouth in public again. Indeed, a warrior should be prudent and act with reserve.

These words are for the understanding of those who would be warriors.

CHAPTER 43

# Always Aspire to Distinction and Merit

It is the first aim of a warrior, even in times of peace, to keep his mind on performing at least one great deed of devotion at one time or another. For the sake of his lord he should attempt an act that all his comrades were unable to accomplish; and even if he is unable to accomplish it himself, he should put great thought and effort toward it. This is a basic intention of the warrior. It is common sense in the martial arts to be determined when facing times of violence—even swearing before the gods and buddhas—to impress both enemies and allies on the battlefield, leaving one's name to be praised to one's last descendants and not returning to one's hometown until one has completed an act of great loyalty.

Concerning this matter, it is reasonable for a man who aims to be a warrior to read the old war chronicles and thus deepen his own resolve. In books like the *Koyogunkan, Shinchoki,* and *Taikoki*[29] that are so popular these days, the events of the battles of those periods are recorded; and even if a warrior were of low rank, his name appears if he performed some praiseworthy act beyond the ordinary. As for the others who died in battle, it is simply recorded that so many hundreds or thousands died. Among those hundreds and thousands there must have been any number of high-ranking samurai, but having done no great works, their names were not put down. Even if of low ranks, only the warriors who performed great acts of martial valor were selected, their names written down for all to see.

It is reasonable to think that both those who died in battle without leaving their names to posterity and those who were struck down and left lasting reputations suffered the same pain when their heads were taken by the enemy. Think this matter over well: if a warrior will give up his life in either situation, he should be resolved and keep his mind on performing some feat

that outdoes all the others. He will die in battle with the admiration of both his enemies and allies, to the sorrow of his lord and general at losing such a man, and to the lasting honor of his descendants.

For a warrior who gives this no consideration and clings steadfastly to life, however, when armies clash on a wide field of battle, he will remain behind his allies, or in retreat think only of being in the fore. When attacking the enemy's castle, he will use his companions as a shield from the thick rain of arrows and gunfire. Yet, although he may be able to stoop beneath them, the arrow of an unavoidable fate will strike him down, and in addition he will be trampled by all his allies. This will be a dog's death. To lose one's precious life in such a way is the deepest humiliation and a regrettable situation, and there is nothing more negligent than this for a warrior.

A samurai should think this over well, and if he must throw away his life on the battlefield as a warrior, he should perform incomparable feats before the eyes of both enemy and ally. He should be struck down in a fine way and leave his name to later generations. To apply oneself earnestly to these thoughts in the morning and their practice at night is the correctness of a warrior.

These words are for the notice of those who would be warriors.

CHAPTER 44

# Accept Difficult Orders Positively

When a warrior is ordered by his lord to some important work such as dispatching a man, it is a matter of principle that he accept his duty in the manly way expected. He should reply by saying that to be chosen from so many retainers for this work is the honor of a lifetime, a divine gift for a warrior, and his most earnest desire. To lack this attitude, however, and accept in a lukewarm manner is the most reprehensible conduct.

Although in a warrior's heart he may be rallying his courage, determined to do an admirable job and return to his lord, success or failure in arms is a matter of fate. A man may not strike well or may even be cut down himself on an occasion for which he thought himself adequate. In either situation, his action is likely to be judged by all his peers later. If both his acceptance and the act were carried off well, the man would be praised by all; he would be a man who both set out to accomplish his mission from the moment he accepted it and completed his task. In a case where the man struck badly or was himself cut down, everyone would sympathize with him, saying that by the way he accepted the job he did not appear to be a man to do poorly, and they would wonder what went wrong.

However, if the man were to accept the job even the least bit vaguely, even if he carried it off well, people would say that it was simply a matter of good luck, and he would be praised by no one. If he did poorly, he would be criticized by all as someone who seemed from the time of his acceptance to be of doubtful effectiveness and who sure enough miscarried his mission.

Thus, a warrior should accept his assignments in a manly way, no matter what they might be.

Generally, a man immersed in being a true warrior will intend to fail at nothing, regardless of how unimportant the matter may be. For example, if a warrior's assistance is requested, he will consider the feasibility of the matter many times over beforehand, and if he thinks it to be impossible, that is yet

one thing. But in a situation where he cannot refuse and he accepts taking up the matter, accepting in an extremely manly way will create deep gratitude in the one who made the request.

If he accepts in what seems to be a vague and grudging manner, however, the requester's gratitude will grow thin in his heart, and he will wish that it had been possible not to ask this man for help, though it was necessary to do so, and will regard the matter as lamentable. In this way, the warrior will be called both poor in spirit and lacking clarity in making decisions, and in the end, ills are likely to multiply. This should be thought over well.

These words are for the understanding of those who would be warriors.

CHAPTER 45

# Do Not Oppose Even the Unreasonable Words of the Lord

It is a primary principle of a warrior serving in a given position to listen with all humility and abashment to the words of the lord whom he is serving, no matter how unjust or chastising they may be. This is essential. Even if the lord should give one the benefit of the doubt and the chance to justify himself, to do so while under criticism of the lord is the same as crossing him, and is an unthinkable crime in the etiquette between lord and retainer. However, if the request goes against the principles of bushidō, and if there are extenuating or acute circumstances, one may ask the chief retainers, elders, and stewards to intercede for one's sake after the matter has passed, so that he will not be forsaken by the lord for too long.

For the consideration of those who would be warriors, there is this story of a warrior of old who managed his response to his lord very well, neither losing his position nor making light of his master's words:

> In the Keicho era [1596–1615], among the retainers of Fukushima Masanori,[30] there was a samurai of great strength by the name of Tsukuda Mataemon. One night during a campaign there was an unexpected uproar in Masanori's camp, and all the samurai of the clan gathered at the headquarters. The following morning, when Masanori asked Mataemon why it was that he had come with a sheathed spear at the time of the previous night's disturbance, Mataemon heard him out and replied that his lord's doubts were certainly justifiable. He went on to say that as the night before had been so cloudy, he had put a rain sheath on his spear and had come in that way, and thus it was natural for the lord to have seen things in the way he did. Masanori responded well to this and the matter was finished.
>
> Later, Mataemon's companions told him that, as for the previous night's concern, everyone had clearly seen that he had come with his spear unsheathed and they were, fortunately, witnesses. When they declared that they could not understand why he had responded that morning with the story of the rain sheath,

Mataemon rejoined that everyone knew that a rain sheath was made of only one sheet of oil paper and was the same as a naked blade. This, he said, was a very light matter. A mistake in perception by a great general was a grave thing, however, and thus Mataemon had responded the way he did. When all the others heard this, they were impressed with the extent of his consideration.

In this day and age, too, warriors serving close to their lord should possess that sort of understanding.

These words are for the consideration of those who would be warriors.

CHAPTER 46

# The Principle of Horsemanship

When a warrior in service is on a journey, if he is of low rank it will be necessary for him to ride a packhorse. Such being the case, regardless of his rank he should ride securely, with the understanding that the sheaths of his long and short swords should not slide off even if he were to fall off the horse. Tightly tying down the hilt of his sword with something like a long sash or winding a thick rope around the hilt of his spear will make him look like a man of shallow purpose, but that is not all. People will know by the insignia on the horse packs to what lord's retainer they belong, and thus even the clan traditions of the master will be criticized as insubstantial by others.

Moreover, according to the customs of travel nowadays, riders will change horses at times mutually agreed upon by the packhorse drivers. If the other rider is a warrior, it is better to get off one's horse only after ascertaining that the other man has dismounted in accord with the packhorse driver's instruction. If one dismounts according to what the packhorse driver says, he may find that the other rider does not want to dismount and there will be no exchange of horses after all. Thus, though one went to the trouble of dismounting, he will have to get back on the same horse again. One should use some discretion in this matter.

Finally, when a warrior is in Edo riding about on either official or private business, since even if an extremely old man he will still have to work on horseback, it is important that he hold the reins himself. Needless to say, it would be an unsightly thing for a young warrior to be led about on his horse with a menial holding the bit at each side, while he himself sat with his hands in his pockets.

These words are for the consideration of those who would be warriors.

CHAPTER 47

# When on an Official Journey, Safety Comes First

When a warrior has received an order to go as an official messenger and is traveling, for example, from Edo to Kamigata,[31] he should hire professional porters for crossing a river when the water level is high—not only for big rivers like the Oigawa but also for any waterway he happens to cross. It would be a great blunder for the horses to trip and fall midstream, soaking the baggage or injuring the servants, all because he was reluctant to spend a little money or relied on his own skill and attempted the crossing without help.

It is, moreover, extreme indiscretion to take the boats from Yokkaichi or Awazu[32] because the distances are shorter. If one were delayed by the difficulty of winds or waves, if he had taken the boat established for public use at Kuwana he would have an excuse. But when one meets difficulties when taking some unwarranted arrangement, there will be nothing he can say. Thus, the ancient poem:

> Though the crossing at Yabase may be short,
> In a hurry, warrior, take the long way ‘round:
> The long bridge at Seta.[33]

This principle not only applies to journeys but is also a frame of mind a warrior must have in all his doings. This is also within the correct principles and teachings of the martial tradition.

These words are for the consideration of those who would be warriors.

CHAPTER 48

# When Accompanying One's Lord

When a warrior is on duty and accompanying his lord on a journey, it is essential that he have a clear understanding concerning the place of that night's stopover—which direction the lord's encampment faces, how wide the area is, what roads lead into it—and have a general recognition of the direction where the sun sets. Should the encampment be in danger during the night from a sudden fire or a bad shift in wind direction and the lord have to leave suddenly, the warrior should be able to take the lead and direct the lord to safety. Moreover, when the sun has set, he should chat with the local people, making landmarks of the mountains, forests, temples, and shrines that can be seen from the place; and he should ask about and have a sense of which ways lie east and west. This is also done with the intention of being able to answer quickly, should anything happen during the night and the lord ask him for directions.

Further, should a warrior be on foot when accompanying his lord, he should precede him going up a hill and follow him going down. Although this seems very trivial, it is one of the mental attitudes assumed by a warrior on duty.

One should take these words as keys and make some effort in turning them about in his mind; and as he is a warrior in service, he should strive without negligence, night and day, to help his lord in some way at least once. This is a basic intention of the warrior.

These words are for the attention of those intending to be warriors.

CHAPTER 49

# The Everyday Care of Armor

It is unseemly for a warrior who serves not to pay attention to the provisions of armor and materials proper to his rank. There are specific laws concerning this throughout the different clans. The provincial lord has determined in advance for the whole clan the banners and attire for each group, as well as the emblems for helmet frontispieces, spears, sleeves, and baggage. It is reasonable that a warrior should make timely arrangements for these things and not be negligent.

It is difficult to gauge when some disturbance may occur, and to be able to prepare suddenly for such a thing, as it is happening, is likely to be impossible. Even if one were able, his habitual negligence would be revealed and he would earn the scorn of others. It is an old principle of the military clans that one who is negligent about the emblems of his clan will be handicapped when fighting alongside his fellows, and thus it is an important matter.

Moreover, the lord will have a deep understanding of military matters and so may order at any time an inspection of the armor of the entire clan's samurai or desire to see it himself. At such a time, there should not be the least insufficiency with the menials' gear, much less with the personal equipment of the associates of higher ranks. If the emblems are placed where the lord can see them clearly, a man will be praised by the lord as well as by the chief retainers and clan elders.

But it is different from other failures if there are insufficiencies here and abnormalities there, having much to do with a samurai's not fulfilling the duties of his station in the Way of the Warrior. Thus, although the lord may pardon such negligence and give no scolding or blame at the time, he will remember the man's limitations and will surely think of him as one who steals his stipend.

Even when he receives no reprimand from his lord, the man who would be

a warrior is never negligent about the proper military equipment and preparations for his rank. For example, if among one's servants there were a careless man who used wood and bamboo for the blades of his long and short swords because he had no need of killing anyone, and who did not wear his loincloth because there was no reason to tuck up his kimono, it would be difficult to ignore such a thing once aware of it. However, this is a matter of such low-status people as servants and attendants, and it is difficult to call it much of a crime.

If a samurai has the full position of a warrior and accepts the stipend due such a rank but has no notion of what military duty is, and, because it is a time of peace, is remiss in the care of military equipment and material, he is one hundred times inferior in right-mindedness to these servants and attendants. When the lord hears of such a thing, what will he think, and how much scorn will he bear? A warrior should be aware of this and never be negligent in his attention to military preparations.

Regarding this, if a warrior of lower rank is going to outfit himself afresh with armor, there are some things he should keep in mind. For example, if he plans to set up a suit of armor for the price of three gold pieces, he should expect to use two-thirds of that for his helmet and body armor. The rest should be used for the various undergarments, outer and inner sashes, a tunic, the coat worn over the armor, a whip, a commander's fan, and even such implements as lacquered buckets and the like for water and provisions. The equipment for a warrior should lack nothing; and whether of high or low quality, it is essential to arrange the entire outfit all at once.

While a warrior must have a suit of armor and will go beyond his means in providing for it, he may be negligent in the preparation of minor accessories, letting them go and thinking them easily obtained at any time. Thus, there are some warriors who pass their entire lives with basic armor, yet without the lesser paraphernalia.

A warrior should keep his tastes in armor simple and, at the same time, be prepared with the small but essential accoutrements.

Now, even if a warrior is young and strong, it is essential that he be careful about having heavy armor with thick metal, large banners for the back of his armor, or large helmet flaps. A warrior of low rank cannot always afford to change his armor, and the armor that is fitting when he is young and strong will not be useful when he gets on in years. Moreover, regardless of how young a man may be, when at the front, he may become sick or wounded. At such a time, no matter how light his armor may be, it will weigh down on his shoulders and become an affliction. Therefore it is said that heavy armor is

useless.

Next, concerning the armor and helmet flaps: if a warrior uses these each time he goes to the front from the time he is young, he will become known by them, and it will be difficult just to put them away when he gets on in years and they become an affliction to him. One should be careful about this.

Moreover, there is one thing a warrior must keep in mind concerning the construction of his armor: he should be very careful about the gauntlets and helmet, though the rest may be commonplace. Especially concerning the helmet, the crown and braided cords should be excellent. On the battlefield, victory and defeat depend on the fate of the moment, and a warrior may be cut down in battle. At such a time, both the helmet and his head will pass into the enemy's hands, and the helmet will be passed down to his descendants, along with the story connected with it. Thus, a warrior's helmet will convey the remnants of his military valor to the eyes and ears of many generations.[34]

These words are for the understanding of those intending to be warriors.

CHAPTER 50

# Consideration for the Equipment of Servants

When an unexpected disturbance occurs, a warrior of low rank is not accompanied to the field by many underlings and carries with him only one spear. Should that spear break, it is certain that he will be in need. Therefore, he should anticipate this and carry an extra spearhead that can quickly be fitted with a bamboo shaft, to take with him on the field. Moreover, he should put aside several short swords made from nicked but sturdy long swords. These he can distribute to his servants when they accompany him to some disturbance. It is also important that he equip them with some proper gear for the stomach and head.

The reason is as follows: because a warrior is conscious of the many years of favors from his lord and abides by the righteousness of his duties, he will never flee, regardless of how dangerous a place may be. He will advance and make a stand even on untenable ground.

The daily favors granted to underlings are scant, and naturally they are little conscious of them. Of course, they know nothing of righteousness; it is for this reason that they are underlings. Moreover, as they are usually attired in clothing fitting to the season and equipped with one rusty short sword, when they meet an upper-class warrior on the field who is outfitted with armor and spear, it is quite natural that they fail to make a stand.

Nevertheless, if even one out of ten of these men were to make a stand in a dangerous situation, never leaving the side of his master, he could not be called an underling. This man could be said to have a backbone surpassing that of a warrior. Therefore, supplying the young servants and menials with some light equipment and swords that will cut through the bones of the enemy is said to be the righteousness and farsightedness of a warrior of low rank.

Moreover, a warrior of low rank will not have a special sword-carrier to walk behind him on the battlefield and, of course, will be unable to carry an extra-long sword with him. That being the case, he will surely be caught short if his sword is dulled or broken on the opponent's armor or helmet that he will inevitably strike in battle. Therefore, he should have his young servant wear the extra-long sword and have the servant's sword worn by a menial like the sandal-carrier or groom.

The time of battle is not like ordinary times, and no one is going to find fault with an underling's carrying two swords at such a time.

These words are for the notice of those intending to be warriors.

CHAPTER 51

# Be Thorough in the Disciplined Practice of the Martial Arts

It is essential for men who would be warriors, even if they are of low rank, to seek out a respected instructor of martial affairs, receive instructions, and come to a deep and detailed understanding even of the secret principles of military strategy. Although some people may think that the study of military principles is unsuitable for a warrior of low rank, this is a great misapprehension caused by a lack of insight. In both past and present, among the men looked to as territorial or provincial leaders or who received fame as generals, there were any number who rose from distance and obscurity to do great things.[35] This being so, there could be warriors from this time forth who could come up in the world from low ranks and become generals.

Thus, it is desirable that even a warrior of low rank attain the knowledge and virtues of one of high rank. If a man pursues and takes a liking to military studies, he will develop both wisdom and ability. By these means, a man who is naturally clever will become increasingly so. There will also be a good effect on the man born a bit thick-witted, for if he studies the martial arts for many years he will not be so slow after all. All this being true, there would appear to be nothing that surpasses the martial arts in a warrior's studies.

However, when a man abuses or practices amiss the martial arts, he will be arrogant about the extent of his own ability, look down on those around him, and speak unreasonable and high-sounding theories, leading unpracticed youths astray and harming their frames of mind. Although such people's words seem just and correct on the surface, their innermost feelings are largely covetous, and their real intentions founded on measuring what will be profitable for them and what will not. Their character gradually grows worse, and later they lose all sense of what it means to be a warrior. This is an error

that comes from pursuing the discipline and practice of martial studies only halfway.

If a warrior is to study military matters, it is essential that he should not stop halfway, but go as far as the secret principles of the martial arts, at last returning to his former "foolishness" where he will have serenity of mind. It would be extremely regrettable for those of us who study to pass our days in only going halfway, letting the deepest principles of the martial arts slip through our grasp, becoming confused by our incomplete understanding, and inevitably leading ourselves and even others afield.

"Returning to foolishness" means something like going back to one's state of mind before one had yet studied the Way of the military. Old expressions such as "miso that smells too much like miso," and similarly "a martial artist who reeks of the martial arts," carry the meaning of "insufferable."

These words are for the understanding of those intending to be warriors.

CHAPTER 52

# Encountering a Commotion When Accompanying the Lord

From times long past to the present day, there have been few incidences of fights or arguments occurring when provincial lords have met. But this does not mean that they will not happen in the future, and the unexpected can always occur.

At such places as ferry landings at river crossings while traveling, for example, when two lords' entourages meet, their retainers may get into an escalating argument, and when the number of men grows, a fight may break out. Under such circumstances, it is not impossible for the feudal lords to become involved as well; and if both lords do, it will become a matter of consequence. This is because when feudal lords disagree while traveling, there is no third party who can handle the matter, and thus coming to a resolution is difficult.

Knowing that disasters move from the bottom up, it is essential to understand that when one accompanies the lord on a journey, everything should be handled with special care. Naturally, oneself and all one's companions should be mindful of things, and the lower-class attendants should be well instructed to do nothing ill-considered.

Moreover, when in Edo and accompanying the lord through the samurai residential district or the middle of town, when passing another lord's group, the young men in the vanguard of both groups may get into an argument that turns into a fight. In such a case, one should quickly assess the matter, take the lord's spear from the hand of his armor bearer, and carry it to the lord's proximity. If one gauges that the developing situation is not going to end peacefully, and all attendant samurai draw their swords, one should bring the lord's horse up to the side of his palanquin, have him mount quickly, take the sheath from his spear, and hand it to him. And one should draw one's own

sword. A warrior should be resolved to all of this.

Further, when the lord is present at some social function and a warrior has come along in attendance, if something unexpected occurs within the residence and he sees that a commotion is developing, he should take sword in hand and approach the front entrance. He should identify his clan and give his name to the attendant, and explain that he has come due to hearing the commotion inside and becoming concerned for his lord. The attendant will likely explain that the warrior's concern is natural, but that nothing has occurred; and that as the lord is safe, he should not worry, but take assurances back to the lord's other attendants. The warrior should express his appreciation, but still request that the lord be brought out to meet him. When he has seen his lord with his own eyes, he may retire.

These words are for the understanding of those intending to be warriors.

CHAPTER 53

# Being Present When the Lord Cuts Down an Attendant

For a warrior serving in close attendance to his lord, when one of his fellows opposes his lord and commits an act of great insolence and incurs the lord's displeasure, if by any chance the man should be cut down by the lord, the warrior in attendance should quickly hold the man down and say, "He is close to death; allow me to finish him off," and thereupon stab him to death. If the man is only wounded and attempts to escape, the warrior should grapple with him immediately and prevent him from going outside. Should the lord say, "Release him and I will cut him down," the warrior should respond, "How could I release such a criminal? Cut me down with the man." And if the lord insists on the man's release, the warrior should say, "The blow from your sword has greatly weakened him. Allow me to finish him off," and quickly stab the man to death.

It has been said since times long past that a lord does not strike a man twice. However, among those with the responsibility of protecting a province or territory, not one in a million would cut a man down carelessly, and thus a warrior is unlikely to need this knowledge. But since the disciplined practice of the Way of the Warrior, as well as the Way of Poetry, includes everything picked up along the way,[36] this is for the understanding of those intending to be warriors.

CHAPTER 54

# It Is Disloyal to Complain About Labor Lost

There are times when a warrior may think he has done an admirable thing in accomplishing some outstanding service. Members of his clan and people of other clans who know the circumstances may also be impressed and praise the man as having done some significant service. Nevertheless, his lord either may not be of such a mind or, while being impressed in his heart, may not especially reward the man due to some external hindrance. Thus, the event may end with much effort but little credit.

In such a case, the man who feels that the lord has no consideration and begins to hold a grudge against him, being inwardly dissatisfied, passing each day in grumbling, and doing his work halfheartedly, is a man of little understanding.

The reason for this is as follows: When a warrior accompanied his lord during the period of Warring States, he would clash with the front line of spearmen on the battlefield or be the first over the wall in storming a castle. If his allies were in retreat, he would take up the rear guard. In any event, he would fight with the intention of performing acts unequaled by his fellows. If inevitable fate decreed his death at the hand of the enemy, he was thoroughly resolved that this was the duty of a warrior. In accomplishing meritorious deeds of martial valor, it was not enough for him to receive many commendations or to be well-known within his clan and beyond. In his heart, knowing that he would not be in this world forever, he wished that he might finish his life being of some use to his lord. This was the righteousness of a warrior.

As for the warrior born in times of peace, though he may have the deep intention of fulfilling his loyalty for his lord in battle, there are no occasions for doing so, and he and his companions have no choice but simply to live,

completing their service indoors, passing the years with regret, and receiving the great kindness of their lord until death. Yet, despite his indoor post, if a man is resolved to do outstanding deeds for the sake of the lord and his clan and in fact does so, he will do meritorious service as a warrior in times of peace.

Nevertheless, even such a man as this can say nothing when reflecting upon the warriors mentioned above, who went out on the battlefield innumerable times, putting their lives on the line for lord and general, extending themselves in laudable deeds and attaining great fame.

Why is this? Because service during times of peace consists only in the skills of wandering around indoors, everyone rubbing the backs of their hands and competing in battles of eloquence. No one is putting his life on the line. Thus, no matter how superb a man may think his own service is, it is outrageous to be thinking about whether the lord's rewards are great or small, or to grumble or be dissatisfied on that account.

The warriors who went out on the battlefield, dashing about so determinedly in soldierly allegiance to their lords, never had the least concern or made calculations about the rewards they might receive. When one considers this, the role of a warrior who holds an office and lives in this world is to consider solely what he can do for the sake of his lord and to work diligently at it.

Let it be up to the condition of the lord's heart whether he will praise your deeds as meritorious or not. Complete your affairs with the resolution to do your duties without complaint or dissatisfaction. This is only reasonable.

The man who disregards this and takes pride in the merits of his own work, coveting the lord's favors, has a cowardly disposition and not the true intention of a loyal retainer.

These words are for the understanding of those intending to be warriors.

CHAPTER 55

# The Responsibility of Counseling Strategy Is Grave

The man who would be a warrior commits himself deeply to the Martial Way, studies the arts of war, and immerses himself in the secrets of strategy and tactics. For a warrior, there is likely no satisfaction or honor greater than receiving, above all the others, the general's command to prepare the strategy for a campaign. Indeed, there is likely no duty as important as this one. The lives of the warrior's allies, and on a greater level the very survival of the fief, depend on that strategy. Therefore, as the praise will fall solely on him, it can be an incomparable exploit when the strategy he advances is put into play and the battle ends in victory for his side.

However, it is hard to imagine a greater defeat than when the enemy has understood the strategy and taken the initiative, and the clan's defenses are put to naught. Thus, it is said that such a duty is a matter of the gravest concern.

What if such a defeat were to occur? What if the first two vanguards were cut in half, the commanders and many men were cut down, and the enemy exploited its advantage and moved forward toward the general's headquarters? The flags and banners in front of the commander's stool would begin to waver, and even the general's safety would fall into question. At such a time, one should quickly give up his commission over the battle, tie on his helmet in a way indicating that he will never untie it again, demonstrate that he will never dismount from his horse, be resolved that he will never show his back to the enemy even if his troops are in retreat, and be struck down in battle, gracing the spears of the enemy with his body.

Since times long past, such a death has been the standard for a warrior who is a clan's influential military leader, especially when he has considered the battle of the day, has spoken to the general and become his chief advisor,

and has blundered the event in the end. Yamamoto Kansuke,[37] at one of the battles at Kawanakajima, was faithful to this principle and was struck down in battle, becoming to the end of time a good model of a clan's military instructor. The tradition of the ancients declares that when a man plans a battle strategy and it fails, he must die.

But what about a man who, while lacking such resolution, enjoys the great reputation as a military instructor to his clan and who, at the time of some disturbance, gives his opinion about the battle strategy to the general, speaking as though no other person quite like himself existed. When the battle has begun he ignores the opinions of others, recommending tactics and contrivances of his own that are contrary to military wisdom and marring the general's commands. He thus causes the loss of a battle that should not be lost and samurai of both high and low rank to be struck down on the field.

Moreover, amid all of this, he himself does not die, but rides around confusedly, coming shamefaced before the general, explaining that though he had thought the matter over well, the situation went differently and resulted as it did, apologizing for his blunders and the trouble he has caused.

Such is not the proper aspect of a warrior who is called a military instructor to his clan.

These words are for the understanding of those who would be warriors and are committed to studying the arts of war.

CHAPTER 56

# Great Loyalty That Surpasses *Junshi*[38]

Once, the custom of *junshi* flourished in Japan, but after its prohibition by the bakufu in the Kanbun era [1661–1663] its practice ceased.[39] Nowadays, there are likely many warriors who, feeling that they have received great favors from their lords' beneficence and having no way to repay such kindness, would like to commit themselves to the act of junshi. However, considering the shōgunate decree, such an act could be looked upon as reflecting the deceased lord's lack of resolution and as insolence on the part of his successor. Thus, it would be an act of extreme disloyalty.

Nevertheless, it is mortifying not to commit oneself to junshi and spend one's whole life with nothing to do but submissively fulfill one's everyday duties. Likely there are men who, in the depths of their hearts, are absolutely determined to do at least one great service, throwing away their lives in some pursuit in which perhaps their comrades were inadequate. To be truly steeped in such determination exceeds the act of junshi a hundred times, and is not only to the credit of one's lord but also a comfort to all his retainers, both high and low. Such determination perfectly combines the three virtues of loyalty, righteousness, and courage, and should be a model to the warriors of these degenerate times.

In service to his lord, a man should be single-minded. The reason is as follows.

In every upper-class house, there is always a ghost that has haunted the clan for some time. Nine out of ten of these ghosts are of a man of lower rank bearing a grudge against those above him and, as such, are not a direct curse on the lord himself. Their curses are brought about in two ways.

The first is when an excellent young warrior from a hereditary house of elders and chief retainers—born with the three qualities of loyalty, righteousness, and courage, with a clear future of being useful to his lord, and already receiving the praise of all—passes away from some unexpected

injury or dies young from a seasonal epidemic, leaving a great loss to his lord. An example of this is Takeda Shingen's great general, Amari Saemon, who fell from his horse and died young. This was lamented by Kosaka Danjo as being caused by a ghost that had long haunted the house of Takeda.

The second kind of curse is when the ghost enters the heart of a man who has come into the good graces of his lord and risen in the world. The man then confuses the mind of his lord, causing him to commit unjust and cruel acts. The ghost that enters the heart of the samurai who has thus risen far above the other clan retainers, elders, and servants will cause the lord to commit various atrocities of six general kinds.

The first of these is when he cleverly obstructs the eyes and ears of his lord, not allowing other men with the same duties or functions as his own to approach. Even if others do succeed in speaking with the lord, the ghost will prevent him from putting their advice into effect. Thus, he takes entire charge of all matters of the clan, great and small, and makes the lord reluctant to do anything without him.

Second is when, on some pretext, he changes the assignments of men of character who are close or in attendance to the lord, or who seem likely to be useful to the lord, thrusting them outside of the inner group, far from the lord's side. These he replaces as he sees fit, strictly with men who have some former connection with himself, or with those who flatter and fawn upon him, or with those who would never disagree with what he says. Such men he makes close attendants, thus ensuring that the lord hears nothing of the man's self-indulgence and self-aggrandizement.

Third, to bewitch the lord's mind and make his own relationship with him closer, he tells the lord that there is nothing more important than having descendants. He then gathers together young women without regard to whose daughters they are, but only on account of their beauty. Beyond that, he brings together koto and shamisen players with all kinds of dancing girls, saying that from time to time a man, be he of high or low rank, needs diversions. In such a case, not only a lord who lacks good sense but even a lord praised as intelligent will easily fall into confusion over matters of sex and soon be lacking in judgment.

Such dalliances being appealing, there will soon be no end to them, and they will eventually become extreme and continue night and day without interval. After the riotous dancing comes the inevitable drinking party, and as the lord is constantly in the inner recesses of the mansion, external and domestic affairs and even such things as fief management become completely foreign to him, and nothing else catches his interest at all. The other chief

retainers and elders find it disagreeable to come before the lord; there being only the possessed man to take care of everything, his influence grows daily, while it seems to matter little whether the others exist or not. Their pride hurt, they remain silent, and the customs of the clan are degraded in every respect.

Fourth, circumstances being such, expenses made in secret grow, and soon there is no way to finance the days to come. Thus begin new laws that run contrary to the former ways of management. The clan's administrators hunt about for money as disasters mount, but they are unable to cover the expenses for domestic affairs. Without the least restraint in causing pain, suffering, and confusion to the lower classes, the lord's every whim is paid for with extravagance. Although his retainers disapprove of the burden placed on those beneath them, they say nothing but hold their dissatisfaction in their hearts. There is not one of them who feels a deep sense of loyalty.

Fifth, it is because the ancestors of the feudal lords of the present fought with loyalty and strength for the shōgunate that their clans have been able to continue to this day. Although there is no reason to abandon the hereditary practice of the military arts just because it is peacetime, the possessed retainer of whom we have been speaking, having no disposition for the martial way himself, will argue against the study of martial planning considering the felicitous conditions of the present. Thus, other retainers who from the beginning had no liking for such things will make no efforts in the military arts and ignore their military equipment, and the clan customs will degenerate simply to meeting the present needs. This is very unseemly for a family lineage that has among its ancestors great generals, for if some disturbance were to occur on the morrow, there would only be great confusion and trembling, and it is doubtful that anything at all could be accomplished.

Sixth, the lord's diversion in merrymaking, wine, and sex thus increasing, his willfulness will grow more violent, and in addition his health will decline. All his retainers will be disheartened and fall into mere routine, lacking trust or reliability. This will not be viewed favorably by either the public or the bakufu—and in the end, will not trouble likely befall the lord's position?

Thus, although the clan's retainers agree that this devilish individual is a monster who will bring the clan to ruin and bear him animosity as a destructive element and an enemy of the lord, not one of them will take the pains to step out and eliminate the man. Nine out of ten will do nothing more than talk about the man's evils, bringing the matter to a public hearing without dirtying their own hands. Battling with the tips of their tongues, they

do nothing more than discuss how best to realize their intentions. The case will not be settled in private, and the details of the problem will reach the lord's kin, becoming a matter of the entire clan. In an extreme course of events, it will be impossible to avoid the judgment of the bakufu.

It has never benefited the position of a provincial lord to have a case of fief mismanagement settled by punishment from the shōgunate court. This is like killing the cow to straighten its horns or burning down a shrine to get rid of the mouse in the altar. It would be unnecessary and most regrettable for one's lord to lose his position, for all his retainers both high and low to become masterless, and to destroy an important clan with a history of many generations just for the sake of a ghost that had haunted it for so long.

This is just the situation for the warrior who feels deeply the favors received from his lord and who, shot through with the desire to repay those favors, would at least commit junshi—as worthless as it is—were it not proscribed by the bakufu. This is the viewpoint from which he could throw away his life in the line of duty.

Now, were he to grab the evil man and finish the matter by carving out his entrails and cutting off his head just as he pleased, and then quickly committing seppuku, the affair would be ended with him seeming to have lost his wits. Thus, there would be no problems or public hearings, the lord's position would not be threatened, the retainers would all feel at ease, and the domain would be at peace. This would be an act one hundred times greater than junshi; would combine the three virtues of loyalty, righteousness, and courage; and would be a model of great devotion for the warriors of this corrupt age.

If there were only one such deeply resolved warrior at the side of every feudal lord, thoughtful only of putting his life on the line for his master and being his safeguard, he would be the same as a living Chung K'uei.[40] Thus, evil and treacherous men with the minds of devils and vicious spirits would hesitate to act and, for the master's sake, perverse and unrighteous deeds would cease.

This should be thought over very carefully.

These words are for the consideration of those who would be warriors.

Thinking that even my foolish writings may be
of some help—
Consider this a keepsake from the parent
who loves his children.

# AFTERWORD

The fateful events of a famous story more than three hundred years old still give rise to debates about the true nature and spirit of bushidō.

In the early spring of 1701, the young lord of Ako, Asano Nagamori, was serving the shōgun, charged with the duty of receiving emissaries to Edo Castle. This required a thorough understanding of a complicated formal etiquette, the proper observance of which reflected the shōgun's prestige. Asano's assigned tutor for these important protocols was an elder lord by the name of Kira Yoshinaka, a man known for his arrogance, greed, and bribe-taking.

Something happened between the two men; it is suggested that Asano did not pay the bribe expected by Lord Kira, who then refused to instruct him correctly, with the result that the young lord took some misstep and was publicly embarrassed. On March 4 of that year, as Kira walked along one of the hallways in the shōgun's mansion, Lord Asano came up behind him and called out his name, and when Kira turned, Asano slashed him in the face with his sword.

Drawing a sword in the shōgun's mansion was forbidden, and Asano's actions precipitated a disaster. He was apprehended and confined to a corner in one of the mansion's rooms, sectioned off by screens. Asano offered no resistance and responded calmly to the officers who had captured him. Kira was given medical attention and kept in a different corner of the same room, where he cowered in fear of another attack by Asano. In the interrogations that ensued, Asano spoke only to say that he was aware that he had committed an outrage and would accept the shōgunate's punishment. Kira, whose reputation prompted suspicion that he had provoked the young lord, pleaded his innocence and declared that he did not understand why Asano had attacked him.

The judgment was swift: despite the protests of the deputy inspectors and the prevailing principle of *kenka ryoseibai* (both parties in a quarrel being equally to blame), Asano was condemned to commit seppuku that very day. His castle was to be confiscated by the central government, and all his

retainers would become rōnin.

Seppuku was the honorable sentence for the lord of a castle, but the deputy-inspectors also protested the locale chosen for Asano's suicide: a small, nondescript yard that they felt did not befit his rank. The authorities' decision was firm, however, and the young lord ritually disemboweled himself that very day. His death poem read:

*Kaze sasou hana yori mo nao ware wa mata*
*haru no nagori wo ikani to ka sen*

More than the cherry blossoms, the wind invites me away;
But how can I bid farewell to the departing spring?

Lord Asano's retainers, grief-stricken and humiliated, faced a momentous decision of their own. Oishi Kuranosuke, Asano's house administrator, and forty-seven of the lord's most trusted and loyal retainers discussed and contended over their options. They could give up the castle peacefully and disband, thereby demonstrating their respect and loyalty to the shōgunate and, by extension, to Asano as well. They could surrender the castle and then commit seppuku. They could put up an obviously futile resistance to the bakufu's seizure of the castle, and then commit seppuku when the battle was lost. However, all of these options left Kira alive and sleeping soundly at night; none dealt with what they considered his culpability in the death of their lord.

Another alternative was to attack and kill Kira at once, a solution made difficult if not impossible by the fact that Kira's mansion was now heavily guarded.

Kuranosuke and the forty-seven surrendered Asano's castle and seemed to abandon any thoughts of revenge. Some took jobs as laborers or other menial work, and Kuranosuke began drinking heavily and womanizing, eventually divorcing his wife. Some thought that this was all subterfuge on the part of the rōnin; but one day, a detractor yanked Kuranosuke's sword out of its scabbard and found it completely rusted. Throwing it down in disgust, he, and before long much of the public, criticized the men as being devoid of loyalty.

But it was all indeed a ruse, and since the rōnin had not seemed to harbor thoughts of retribution, no one anticipated their eventual attack. In the early hours of December 15, 1702—nearly one year and eight months after Lord Asano's death—Kuranosuke and the forty-seven rōnin broke into Kira's Edo mansion, found him hiding in a small woodshed, offered him the face-saving

route of seppuku, and when he declined, cut off his head. They proceeded directly to Sengakuji[41] and placed the head on Asano's grave. Without delay, they then sent a full report to the authorities and provided a list of all who had participated in the vendetta.

The men were taken into custody and entrusted to various daimyo, who kept them incarcerated in their mansions. On February 4, 1703, fifty days after the death of Kira, Kuranosuke and the forty-seven were condemned to death by seppuku, and all were dead by the end of the day. They, too, are buried at Sengakuji.

The general response to the entire incident was public admiration for the forty-seven rōnin and indignation at the government. The first dramatization of the story of the "loyal and righteous retainers" [*chushin gishi,* 忠臣義士] appeared a mere twelve days after their deaths and has been followed by innumerable plays, novels, movies, and manga.

Shōgunate scholars, however, had mixed opinions about the affair. Despite the Confucian dictum that "No man should live under the same sky as his lord's enemy," many argued that neither Asano nor the forty-seven should have acted against the laws of the bakufu. Others reasoned that the forty-seven were correct in killing Kira—an argument bolstered by the fact that they were allowed to commit seppuku—*and* that the bakufu was correct in punishing them for killing Kira. Still others opined that Kira and Asano had deserved equal punishment.

Yet another view was expressed by Yamamoto Tsunetomo, the author of *Hagakure:*

> Concerning the night assault of Lord Asano's rōnin, the fact that they did not commit seppuku at Sengakuji was an error, for there was a long delay between the time their lord was struck down and the time when they struck down the enemy. If Lord Kira had died of illness within that period, it would have been extremely regrettable.

The central issue of the debate is what constitutes true loyalty and duty for the warrior. This is the theme and substance of *Budōshoshinshu,* Yūzan's immortal legacy to Japanese culture, philosophy, and ethical standards.

A Chinese Sung dynasty text states that "*chushin gishi* can legitimately be worshipped at shrines devoted to them." Arguments for and against the veneration of the forty-seven rōnin continued throughout the Edo period, but by the late nineteenth century, Sengakuji had become a shrine for their

worship, where even Emperor Meiji extolled their loyalty and self-sacrifice. Every year on December 14, Sengakuji celebrates Gishi-sai, a festival in memory of the avenging attack on Lord Kira and his ignominious downfall.

# NOTES

1.
*Sources of Japanese Tradition,* vol. 1, 429.

2.
Kagenori (1572–1663) was a general of the Takeda clan during the final struggles for military hegemony, and Ujinaga (1609–1670) had been raised in the service of Tokugawa Ieyasu.

3.
"Should you lose your body, you are good for nothing. Further, to damage or destroy it thoughtlessly is the highest ingratitude. Indeed, to consider the gift of life as your possession alone and then to abuse it by overindulging in food, drink, sex, or in any other manner is to squander your health and invite disease to enter. To hasten your own demise so thoughtlessly demonstrates extreme ingratitude." Kaibara Ekiken, *Cultivating Ch'i* (Boston: Shambhala Publications, 2013), 5.

4.
One of Japan's greatest literary works, written circa 1330–1331 C.E.

5.
戦氣, "The spirit of battle"; famously rendered in calligraphy by Miyamoto Musashi.

6.
戦国時代, *sengoku jidai,* from the middle of the fifteenth century to the end of the sixteenth.

7.
The Four Books: *The Great Learning, The Doctrine of the Mean, The Analects,* and *The Mencius.* The Five Classics: *The Book of Changes, The Book of Documents, The Book of Poetry, The Book of Rites,* and *The Spring and Autumn Annals.* These nine books are Confucian classics. The Seven Books are military classics.

8.
Shinshu: the modern province of Nagano, which includes the Kiso Valley, long famous for its fine horses.

9.
All titles of various degrees; the significance is not in the definitions of the words but in the similar structures of the two disciplines. Translations of these terms would be tedious and likely misleading.

10.

Consider this story: In the spring of 1592, the forces of the once-powerful Takeda clan had been nearly destroyed. Outnumbered by the enemy nearly ten to one, the last feudal lord of the clan fled the provincial capital to Mount Tenmoku, where he was captured and killed, his once-matchless troops in full retreat. Tsuchiya Sozo, a warrior who had been in disfavor for many years, came out alone, however, resolved to show his sincerity. With the remark, "I wonder where all the men are who spoke so bravely every day?" he walked out onto the battlefield to die alone in combat.

11.

"When a bird is at the point of death, his cries will be plaintive; when a man is at the point of death, his words will be good." *Rongo* (*Analects*) 8:4.

12.

"Practicing *cha no yu* [the tea ceremony] is for escaping the complications of society's dust and approaching our abodes in the crags and fields; it is for following after the leisure of the streams, clouds, birds and fish, and for putting our minds at ease. This is what I thought, and so practiced it with great relish. However, when I looked carefully at the people in this world who love it the most, I found that they [often] discussed the high or low value of tea utensils, and that they either praised or were envious of those who are expert at buying utensils worth a thousand strings of cash for only a hundred, or that they wished that they might buy something at a cheap price and sell it for a dear one. Such people have lost the true principles of Tea. Even if this were not so, men's minds are easily moved by material things."—Kobayakawa Takakage (1533–1597)

Adopted by the powerful Kobayakawa clan of the Hiroshima area, Kobayakawa Takakage furthered the influence of his adoptive father's clan in central Japan. He at first fought against Oda Nobunaga and Toyotomi Hideyoshi, but later came to an agreement with the latter and fought on his side. He eventually became one of Hideyoshi's five *tairo,* or Elders, charged with being regents to Hideyoshi's heir.

13.

According to the old Japanese reckoning.

14.

Farmers, artisans, and tradesmen.

15.

If no male heir was born to a family, children were often adopted to continue the family line.

16.

One koku equals 4.96 bushels (of rice, in this case).

17.

"Furthermore, during the last thirty years customs have changed; now, when young samurai get together, if there is not just talk about money matters, loss

and gain, secrets, clothing styles or matters of sex, there is no reason to gather together at all. Customs are going to pieces." Yamamoto Tsunetomo, *Hagakure,* trans. William Scott Wilson (Boston: Shambhala Publications, 2012), 20.

18.

A warrior could have been masterless for many reasons. Often a family line was continued by the first son, and younger sons were on their own.

19.

"Once, Hori Hidemasa secretly went down to the town around the castle and set up a placard criticizing his own governing practices. His chief retainers had no idea that he had done this; and when they became aware of the sign, they were shocked and advised him to search for the criminal and give him a severe punishment. At length, Hidemasa read the placard carefully, adjusted his *hakama,* rinsed his mouth, bowed to the placard three times, and said, 'Isn't there anyone here who will remonstrate with me like this? This is a matchless gift from Heaven. The placard upon which this is written is our clan's pleasure.'"—Hori Hidemasa (1553–1590)

Hidemasa first served Nobunaga as the governor of Nagahama Castle in Omi. After Nobunaga's assassination, he followed Hideyoshi, orchestrating the fall of Akechi Mitsuhide's Sakamoto Castle. During the action at Odawara, he led the vanguard but later became sick and died at Shinagawa in the province of Musashi. It is said that Hideyoshi mourned his death with great lamentation.

20.

Marishiten was worshipped in Japan during the Middle Ages by warriors, especially archers, who often wore her image. She protected those who invoked her name and made them invisible in danger. *Buddhism: Flammarion Iconographic Guides,* 225.

21.

*Ichiban yari* and *ichiban nori,* respectively.

22.

"Meng Chih-fan did not boast. When in retreat to the castle, he whipped his horse and said, 'It's not that I dared to bring up the rear; my horse just wouldn't go any faster.'" *Rongo* (*Analects*) 3:6, 15.

23.

Ritual suicide, also known as *hara-kiri.*

24.

"There are some men who treat their wives coldly. If there is a reason that they should separate from them, then they should do so. If there is no such reason, they should treat them with affection. A man who treats his wife coldly will perhaps be a cold person himself and is not to be relied upon." —Todo Takatora (1556–1630)

An ardent Buddhist, Todo Takatora was a descendent of a *daimyo* family distantly related to the Imperial Family. He first served Oda Nobunaga and later Toyotomi Hideyoshi after Oda Nobunaga's death. At the Battle of Sekigahara,

he switched his allegiance to Tokugawa Ieyasu and was duly rewarded with a large fief at Tsu.

25.

*Corvée* refers to unpaid labor (construction of roads and so forth) due from a feudal vassal to his lord.

26.

From the tenth chapter of *The Great Learning* (*Daigaku*), one of the Confucian Four Books.

27.

That is, it will cause one to dissolve.

28.

The meaning is that if one is rebuked but suffers no lasting harm, all is well.

29.

The war chronicles of Takeda Shingen, Oda Nobunaga, and Toyotomi Hideyoshi, respectively.

30.

Fukushima Masanori (1561–1624) served both Hideyoshi and Ieyasu, received fame for his part in the battle at Shizugatake, and was at one time the daimyo of Hiroshima.

31.

Kamigata is in the Kyoto-Osaka area.

32.

Yokkaichi, Kuwana, and Awazu were points of departure for ferry crossings. The first two were on the way to Atsuta (Nagoya) coming from the south, and Awazu was at Lake Biwa.

33.

Yabase was a ferry departure point for crossing Lake Biwa from the north. To cross the bridge at Seta, one had to walk somewhat farther south.

34.

"You should take great care with the workmanship of your helmet. If the worst happens and your head is taken by the enemy, your helmet will accompany your head when it is placed before the opposing general. The rest of your armor can be shabby. It will just be thrown aside somewhere anyway."—Kato Yoshiaki (1563–1631)

Yoshiaki served Hideyoshi and distinguished himself at the Battle of Shizugatake. During the Korean campaign, he took an active part in naval operations and made a name for himself by capturing a number of ships. He joined the Tokugawa forces at both Sekigahara and the siege of Osaka Castle, and he was awarded with a fief at Aizu.

35.

Yūzan no doubt refers to Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1536–1598), who rose from farmer's child to *kampaku,* the most powerful position in Japan at that time.

36.

“Learning is something that should be acquired broadly. It is, for example, like a beggar’s bag, in which everything from leftover meat to cold soup is stored.”—Hosokawa Yusai (1534–1610)

Yusai served Nobunaga, Hideyoshi, and Ieyasu, and he was highly regarded by all three. He had a great talent in political matters and yet devoted himself to the arts of poetry and tea, at which he excelled. It is said that he laid the foundation for the system of etiquette adopted by the Tokugawa bakufu.

37.

Yamamoto Kansuke (d. 1561) was a legendary strategist and castle architect for the warlord Takeda Shingen.

38.

Junshi, also called *tsuifuku,* was the custom of committing suicide by seppuku (hara-kiri) or some other means at the death of one’s lord. The practice was prohibited by the central government in 1663.

39.

“In the common world, junshi is considered to be a matter of gratitude. If someone does not commit junshi for a lord, he is called disloyal; if one does not commit junshi for a vassal, he is said to be lacking in gratitude. This [attitude] should be understood to be inhumane. When I die, please prohibit this custom.” —Tokugawa Yorifusa (1603–1661), Tokugawa Ieyasu’s eleventh son

At the age of seven, Yorifusa was made the lord of Mito Castle. At thirteen he participated in the summer siege of Osaka Castle and, as a general, had experience at the actual site of war. Even when a child, he had a surprisingly strong sprit; at the age of six, when Ieyasu asked him what he wanted, he replied, “the empire.”

40.

Chung K’uei (in Japanese, Shoki) is a Chinese god known for quelling demons.

41.

A temple in the city of Edo (now the Minato ward of Tokyo).

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